

Collaborative Programs
Research Report

CUNY
GEAR UP

A History of the Project
Donna Linderman

An Evaluation of GEAR UP:
Archival Data Analyses & Student Focus Groups
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Preface

GEAR UP, an acronym for “Gain Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs,” is a federally funded “discretionary grant program designed to increase the number of low-income students who are prepared to enter and succeed in postsecondary education” (from the U.S. Department of Education Web site www.ed.gov/programs/gearup). CUNY GEAR UP was a consortial project administered through Collaborative Programs in the Office of Academic Affairs with five-year funding under a New York State GEAR UP grant beginning in 2000. The project concluded on August 31, 2005, with some ongoing follow-up services for students who are attending college as well as those still working towards high school graduation.

CUNY’s Collaborative Programs, through which the University coordinates its various partnerships with the New York City Department of Education, includes College Now; the Affiliated Schools; a Middle Grades Initiative; an Early College Initiative; the Creative Arts Team; CUNY Prep, a program for out-of-school youth, and the Young Adult Learning Academy (YALA). The University’s largest partnership with the secondary school system—College Now—was expanded in 1999–2000 to include all seventeen CUNY colleges. Its goals are to help students meet graduation requirements and be prepared to succeed in college. In the 2004–2005 academic year, College Now served over 32,400 students, in more than 230 schools, in a variety of credit and non-credit courses and activities. The original GEAR UP grant proposal was intended as an extension of College Now programming, which was at that time primarily for students in the 11th and 12th grades.

This Collaborative Programs Research Report contains two parts: the first part, “A History of the Project” by Donna Linderman, provides an overview of CUNY GEAR UP, including background information, an account of the start-up and ongoing organizational challenges, and the rationale for changes that were implemented to improve program efficacy. The report also cites a short list of “lessons learned,” as articulated by Central Office and campus GEAR UP staff who met over the final year of the project to identify best practices for future multiyear school partnerships.

The second part of the report is based on a year-long study of the project in 2004–2005 by Corinne Baron-Donovan, a CUNY Collaborative Programs Research Fellow. As part of her evaluation, Ms. Baron-Donovan analyzed archival student data, for the most part through 2004, from CUNY GEAR UP activity records and academic and demographic records from the New York City Department of Education. She also conducted focus groups of GEAR UP students and

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We believe that our work in Collaborative Programs at the intersection of the two largest public urban school systems in the United States situates us at one of the centers of programmatic innovation in promoting access to and success in higher education.

analyzed their responses. Appendices A–E contain supplemental analyses of a technical nature from her study.

Our thanks to the New York City Department of Education, to Lori Mei, Senior Instructional Manager of the Division of Assessment and Accountability, and to Jan Rosenblum, Manager of the Data Management Accountability Unit, for facilitating our access to student data included in this study. Our thanks also to all the CUNY GEAR UP campus program coordinators and staff, without whose efforts neither the GEAR UP program nor this study would have been possible.

This Research Report provides a candid look at the challenges involved in delivering services to students with this model. Equally as important, however, it documents how many successful elements were refined over the five-year project. We believe that our work in Collaborative Programs at the intersection of the two largest public urban school systems in the United States situates us at one of the centers of programmatic innovation in promoting access to and success in higher education. We hope this report will be of use to the University as it continues to provide similar or related services through its new Middle Grades Initiative and coordinated activities in College Now.

Stuart Cochran

Principal Investigator

Director of Research & Evaluation for Collaborative Programs

June 1, 2006

A History of the Project

DONNA LINDERMAN

FROM its inception in 2000, numerous challenges to the development and implementation of an effective program confronted CUNY GEAR UP. The eventual development of an effective approach required ongoing changes to programming, delivery models and administrative protocols. This introduction is intended to illuminate the challenges and describe the changes introduced to develop a more effective program.

Background

GEAR UP is a federal initiative designed to promote the enrollment in college of students from traditionally underrepresented populations. It emphasizes the provision of continuous services to cohorts of students, initially identified in middle school, throughout their high school years. The viability of the cohort model is directly related to the extent to which the initial members continue to attend the same school in subsequent years.

In the summer of 2000, CUNY's Office of Academic Affairs submitted a proposal to the New York State Higher Education Services Corporation (HESC) in response to a Request for Proposals—according to the plan embedded in New York State's proposal to the United States Department of Education for a state GEAR UP grant in 1999. The state proposal identified HESC as the coordinating agency for the project. It also outlined a plan for the involvement of several "sector" partners, including CUNY, which would provide support services to funded programs, and for the awarding of grants to local partnerships through a competitive process.¹ While CUNY was assured funding for its services as a sector partner, the Central Office decided to submit a proposal for the competitive funds on behalf of a University Consortium, which included eight colleges and a college-based institute: Borough of Manhattan Community College, Brooklyn College, Kingsborough Community College, Hunter College, Lehman College, New York City College of Technology, the College of Staten Island, York College and the Gateway Institute at The City College of New York. In all but three cases, the campus programs were designed as extensions of existing College Now programs. The proposal identified nine middle schools with a total cohort population of approximately 2,400 eighth graders in the 2000–2001 school year. Those middle schools were selected in consultation with Community School District leaders across the city. As required by federal regulations, all of the middle school partners had a free- or reduced-price lunch index of at least 50 percent, with a program-wide average of 83.5 percent.

¹Additional New York State GEAR UP Sector partners included The College Board, the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities, the State University of New York, the Association of Proprietary Colleges, and the State Education Department.

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Table 1: Middle Schools and Their Neighborhoods in the Original Grant Proposal

Bronx	Middle School 135 (<i>Pelham Parkway</i>)
Brooklyn	Brooklyn College Academy (<i>Kensington</i>) Middle School 136 (<i>Sunset Park</i>) Intermediate School 291 (<i>Bushwick</i>)
Manhattan	Junior High School 45 (<i>East Harlem</i>) Intermediate School 143 (<i>Washington Heights</i>)
Queens	Intermediate School 180 (<i>Rockaway</i>) Queens Gateway to the Health Sciences School (<i>Jamaica</i>)
Staten Island	Intermediate School 49 (<i>Stapleton</i>)

The high schools were selected based on the feeder patterns of prior cohorts from the nine middle school partners, and represented a range of both large comprehensive and smaller high schools.

In addition, sixteen high schools were proposed as potential partners for years two through five. The high schools were selected based on the feeder patterns of prior cohorts from the nine middle school partners, and represented a range of both large comprehensive and smaller high schools. The proposed high schools also included eight schools then partnered with a College Now Pilot Program, which provided enriched academic and counseling services to students beginning in the 9th grade. All high schools were selected in consultation with the leaderships of the seven superintendencies with responsibility for high schools (BASIS, Brooklyn, Bronx, Manhattan, Queens, Alternative, Chancellor’s District) and the campus-based coordinators of the University’s College Now Program. The high school partner schools were to be finalized once students had completed the high school admission process.

The total CUNY grant request was for \$1,300,000 per year, or \$541 per student. The actual award amounted to \$910,000 per year, or \$379 per student. CUNY received an additional \$200,000 in annual funding as a sector partner. While CUNY received notification of its 5-year grant in the fall of 2000, due to the absence of an approved contract, we were unable to begin services to students in the middle schools until April 2001. During the intervening months, we attempted to firm up relationships with middle school principals and to lay the basis for a quick start-up upon contract approval. Those efforts met with limited success.

During the delayed start-up phase, several other significant changes were made in the internal organization of the project. Both BMCC and Hunter College decided to discontinue their involvement with the project at IS 143 in Washington Heights, and Kingsborough Community College soon afterwards decided to discontinue its proposed involvement with the project at the High School for Telecommunications Arts and Technology, which was picked up by

New York City College of Technology. In light of the late date, the University decided to assume responsibility for services to graduates of IS 143 in the Central Office, rather than arrange another college partner.

Start-up Issues

As a result of the delay, GEAR UP staff met students for the first time two months before they graduated from middle school. Not surprisingly, this had a significant impact on the ability of program staff to establish relationships with students, their families and teachers. Additionally, the late start date caused several middle school leaders to reconsider the extent of their involvement with the project—from their point of view, any benefits that might accrue to students in the last couple of months of middle school would be of very limited benefit to the school. Nonetheless, after-school tutoring programs were implemented at all middle schools, and several campus-based summer programs were developed.

Table 2: CUNY GEAR UP College/School Partnerships Fall 2001

Brooklyn College	Bushwick High School
CUNY Central Office	George Washington High School for Law and Public Service George Washington High School for Media and Communication George Washington High School for Health Careers and Science George Washington High School for International Business and Finance High School of Fashion Industries Norman Thomas High School Louis D. Brandeis High School
Hunter College	Vanguard High School Washington Irving High School Manhattan Center for Mathematics and Science
Lehman College	Christopher Columbus High School DeWitt Clinton High School Evander Childs High School Harry S. Truman High School
New York City College of Technology	High School for Telecommunication Arts and Technology High School for Global Studies The School for International Studies
College of Staten Island	Curtis High School New Dorp High School
York College	Beach Channel High School Far Rockaway High School
The Gateway Institute at City College	Queens Gateway to the Health Sciences Secondary School. <i>(Subsequently, the responsibility for the program at Queens Gateway was transferred to Queens College in September 2002.)</i>

Once GEAR UP staff members were able to enter the partner high schools, it was discovered that anywhere from 10–40 percent of GEAR UP students had failed to report to their official high school of record.

As of the end of the school year (spring 2001), students from the nine partner middle schools had been admitted to 144 high schools across the city. Over the summer, CUNY staff worked with school guidance personnel to identify the high schools that would be enrolling the cohort members—based on data available in spring 2001. This examination resulted in several high schools being added to the list of partner schools. Although at most high schools the GEAR UP cohort would make up only a small subset of the entering 9th grade class, principals indicated their support for the project. CUNY agreed that some resources, such as tutoring and college trips, would be made available to non-GEAR UP students provided GEAR UP students were being served. As a result of these changes, the college/school partnerships in fall 2001 were as shown in Table 2 (previous page).

Once GEAR UP staff members were able to enter the partner high schools, it was discovered that anywhere from 10–40 percent of GEAR UP students had failed to report to their official high school of record in September. This represented a major challenge to college staff, as their cohorts, who would have already been a subset of the entering 9th-grade class, now represented an even smaller group of students. For example, Evander Childs High School, with a 9th grade class of more than 1,400 students, was to have enrolled 60 GEAR UP students from MS 135. Only 39 students reported in the fall of 2001. A variation of this scenario was replicated at most of the partner high schools. (See Table 3, next page.)

COLLEGE staff spent several months attempting to locate missing students and inform them that GEAR UP services would be available to them at their high schools or at the partner colleges. We discovered that some students had moved out of the city and others had opted to attend different public or private schools. In most cases, however, their names remained on the registers of their original high school. At the largest high schools, locating students was further compounded by the fact that many of them attended classes intermittently. College staff worked closely with school guidance counselors and GEAR UP liaisons² to contact students and their families directly to determine where students were enrolled or why they were not attending classes regularly, but telephone numbers and addresses were frequently incorrect.

Most of the GEAR UP college programs had established after-school tutoring programs as well as a variety of teacher-led workshops by the second half of the 2001–2002 school year. At all but a few of the high schools, after-school tutoring was not well attended by GEAR UP students, despite efforts by college staff and their school liaisons to promote those programs. Promotional efforts included school-day ori-

² An administrator or teacher was identified at each partner high school to serve as a liaison to the affiliated college GEAR UP staff. Liaisons were asked to help with collection of student academic records, promotion of GEAR UP activities and events, and facilitation of college and educational trips.

Table 3: Fall 2001 Entering 9th-grade Class Sizes (Expected and Actual CUNY GEAR UP Cohorts)

High School	Entering 9th Grade Class*	Expected CUNY GEAR UP Cohort Registrants	Actual CUNY GEAR UP Cohort Registrants
Bushwick High School	821	150	100
High School of Fashion Industries	524	70	25
Norman Thomas High School	510	50	38
Louis D. Brandeis High School	1,220	65	35
George Washington High School for Law and Public Service	185	75	64
George Washington High School for Media and Communication	177	65	56
George Washington High School for Health Careers and Science	155	35	45
George Washington High School for International Business and Finance	172	35	17
Vanguard High School	145	35	22
Washington Irving High School	902	100	20
Manhattan Center for Mathematics and Science	428	50	22
Christopher Columbus High School	1,083	185	139
DeWitt Clinton High School	1,018	85	33
Evander Childs High School	1,437	60	39
Harry S. Truman High School	1,093	55	59
High School for Telecommunication Arts and Technology	354	50	24
High School for Global Studies	162	50	10
The School for International Studies	86	20	7
Curtis High School	813	150	123
New Dorp High School	634	150	89
Beach Channel High School	750	150	109
Far Rockaway High School	484	75	21
Queens Gateway to the Health Sciences Secondary School	121	115	116

* Source: NYCBOE Annual School Report Cards 2001–2002

Almost all of the Manhattan GEAR UP high schools enrolled “commuter” populations of students who traveled across the city to and from school. Many of these schools did not have well-developed after-school cultures, and students were accustomed to leaving school immediately after classes ended.

entations and announcements, mailings and phone calls, and evening events to familiarize parents with GEAR UP offerings. Based on reports from the college coordinators, it appeared that the low rates of participation in tutoring resulted from a combination of circumstances: student disengagement from school work, a reluctance of students to stay after school, and safety concerns.

While many GEAR UP students had entered high school unprepared for ninth grade work and most continued to struggle in high school, many students were simply not interested in spending additional time on subjects that gave them so much trouble during the school day. Many students felt that after-school tutoring was a form of detention and believed it would stigmatize them among their peers. To the extent that the after-school tutoring did not provide a dramatically different type of opportunity to learn, it simply did not appear to be that attractive.

Almost all of the Manhattan GEAR UP high schools enrolled “commuter” populations of students who traveled across the city to and from school. Many of these schools did not have well-developed after-school cultures, and students were accustomed to leaving school immediately after classes ended and returning to their own neighborhoods. Furthermore, many GU students were expected to return home promptly to assist with the care of younger siblings or to help with domestic responsibilities. A large number of students worked part-time jobs to help their families meet basic expenses. At schools where there was an after-school culture, GEAR UP services were frequently in competition for the same group of students as other existing programs. This included school-sponsored academic, sports, and arts programs as well as those offered by on-site non-profit service providers.

Another significant factor was a very real concern for safety at specific schools. Many students did not want to be in or around the school building after classes ended due to regular incidents of violence. This view was shared by parents and families, who for the most part wanted their children to leave school as soon as classes concluded.

We have highlighted the issues encountered in establishing our after-school tutoring programs, but they were in fact emblematic of a consortium-wide struggle to generate significant participation in all program areas. Parent outreach workshops were organized and promoted by college staff, but had very low turnout at all high schools. Teacher-led clubs and special projects generated some student interest, but often from non-GEAR UP students. When questioned about enrollment patterns, teachers indicated frustration that a select group of the school’s population was being targeted for services.

It should also be noted that the 2001–2002 school year was significantly disrupted by the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center on September 11th. CUNY GEAR UP services were delayed by more than two months at all high schools, and for most of the fall semester at

the five schools in Manhattan below 96th Street.³ As an example of how extensive the disruptions were, Norman Thomas High School hosted a second high school that had been displaced from the area immediately surrounding Ground Zero in its building for the entire school year, making space for onsite GEAR UP programming impossible.

At the end of the 2001–2002 school year, the total number of reported hours for student participation in all CUNY GEAR UP activities was quite low. Once these realities came to the attention of HESC, the coordinating agency for the New York State GEAR UP program, CUNY GEAR UP was placed on probation in September 2002. A number of stringent reporting requirements were imposed and the University began to look for ways to re-establish the program on firmer ground.

The Central Office implemented a consortium-wide examination of proposed activities by all partner colleges. All colleges submitted detailed activity plans for 2002–2003. Minimum participation figures were established, and all colleges articulated the steps that would be taken to implement and promote programs. In order to document progress with HESC, colleges were asked to submit bi-weekly activity reports to the Project Director, who provided regular feedback.

In early 2003, staff changes were made at three partner colleges based on continued patterns of low participation, failure to establish a program presence at high schools, and substandard reporting practices. New program coordinators were recruited with significant high school and management experience.

The Central Office also accepted its own responsibilities for the shortcomings of the project. We realized that sound central organization would be vital to colleges attempting to build strong local programs. The entire Central Office GEAR UP staff was reorganized, and procedures were established for consortium-wide data collection, record keeping and reporting. Most importantly, a more hands-on approach to oversight of college programs was adopted, with the Central Office GEAR UP staff working closely with colleges to evaluate all aspects of programs on an ongoing basis.

CUNY also proposed “rebuilding” cohorts at high schools that had lost significant numbers of students. By “rebuilding cohorts” we meant to enroll students who had not attended the initial set of middle schools. HESC agreed but stipulated that colleges could not exceed the total number of their middle school cohorts. Colleges partnered with small high schools chose to adopt the entire 10th grade as their GEAR UP cohort. Colleges partnered with very large high schools with more than 500 students per grade did not have this option, since the available funds would not support programs of this size. At large high schools, smaller groups of students were added to the cohort based on

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³ Washington Irving High School, High School of Fashion Industries, Norman Thomas High School, Vanguard High School, and Louis D. Brandeis High School.

In the summer of 2002, the Central Office sponsored curriculum development workshops led by an experienced high school English and theater teacher, who brought together ten professional artists to create project-based arts units.

extensive discussions with school liaisons or guidance staff. College and school staff worked together to identify students who had regularly participated in GEAR UP tutoring or workshop programs during the 2001–2002 school year, or those who had expressed interest in becoming part of the program. In schools with smaller learning communities designated as “academies” or “houses,” an entire grade of one learning community was adopted as the GEAR UP cohort. Cohort redefinition proved to be an effective change at all high schools. It increased GEAR UP program identity at most high schools, strengthened relationships with school staff, and provided a greater critical mass of students to serve.

By May 2003, the project as a whole had sufficiently improved to the extent that it was taken off of probation. By fall 2003, CUNY GEAR UP had moved a considerable way towards becoming a significant and effective presence in the educational lives of its students.

Since there was a clear need for academic support in English language arts and math, but lack of interest in after-school tutoring, the Central Office staff recommended that college programs adopt an in-class delivery model. In this approach, tutors would provide services in the classroom of a cooperating teacher and would meet weekly with teachers during preparatory periods to develop plans for classroom practice. This proved to be a very successful adjustment. Relationships between project staff, students and teachers were strengthened, and, often enough, tutors became mentors to their students, who were now more interested in meeting with their tutors after school or at lunchtime for individual tutoring. This shift was made at eleven GEAR UP high schools in 2003–2004.

The creation of more engaging after-school offerings focused on the arts had been a priority since spring 2002, when it became clear that after-school tutoring was not the most effective option. In the summer of 2002, the Central Office sponsored curriculum development workshops led by an experienced high school English and theater teacher, who brought together ten professional artists to create project-based after-school units in a variety of arts disciplines. Project-based workshops included songwriting, theater improvisation, film, video production, career explorations, and African dance, and all included reading, writing and some use of math. Artists presented their work to a high school focus group to ensure that the offerings were engaging for young people, and final presentations were made to college GEAR UP staff in August along with fully developed lesson plans and project descriptions. Nine of the workshops were implemented at seven GEAR UP high schools over the next two years. School personnel were impressed with the range and complexity of projects created by students, including a conflict resolution video, a fully edited 30-minute film, and a DVD yearbook.

Another important component of the effort to improve the efficacy of GEAR UP services was our emphasis on working with teachers to

improve student achievement. Funded with a supplemental grant from HESC, CUNY GEAR UP sponsored a two-part curriculum development series in conjunction with the College of Staten Island's Discovery Institute. For more than fifteen years, the Discovery Institute had offered high school teachers on Staten Island opportunities to redevelop their courses in interdisciplinary workshops held on campus. In spring 2003, we sponsored a 10-week program in Brooklyn at New York City College of Technology for teachers who had not previously participated in Discovery Institute workshops. This was followed by a 3-week intensive program at the College of Staten Island in July 2003 that combined spring participants with Staten Island teachers already working with the Discovery Institute. More than 40 GEAR UP teachers participated in both sections of the program.

Ongoing Challenges

In 2003, the Board of Education was reorganized into the New York City Department of Education under the direct control of Mayor Michael Bloomberg. This reorganization affected every aspect of the way the public school system operated and represented a complete change in leadership at every level. The city was divided into ten regional superintendencies, which absorbed local school districts previously responsible for elementary and middle schools as well as the borough and alternative high school superintendencies. At the regional level, leadership was vested in ten or more local instructional superintendents, who were responsible for a set of schools spanning the K–12 continuum. Many school leaders were reluctant to move forward with any GEAR UP programming until they received clear approval from their new regional leadership. Those approvals were forthcoming, but there were delays in implementing planned activities in the fall of 2003.

One important feature of the NYCDOE reorganization was the decision to accelerate the redesign of large failing schools and to support the establishment of new small schools. The new schools were often housed within the facilities of existing schools, frequently at failing schools that were being phased out. Several GEAR UP schools were affected by these initiatives. Bushwick High School was joined by three new schools in fall 2003 as the existing high school was slated to be phased out. Columbus, Dewitt Clinton, Truman, and Evander Childs each had new schools open in their facilities between 2002 and 2005. Beach Channel opened a new school in 2004. Frequently, the opening of new schools aggravated space problems and some schools were required to adopt staggered schedules to accommodate the additional students. Despite these challenges, CUNY GEAR UP retained school-based programs at all but one GEAR UP high school.⁴

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⁴ GEAR UP students at this high school had ongoing access to programs at the affiliated college campus and summer programs across New York State.

To ensure that GEAR UP students and their families were well informed about college admission, financial aid, and college choices before 12th grade, the Central Office and college staffs launched a multifaceted college awareness initiative in 2003–2004.

Many GEAR UP partner high schools experienced frequent senior staff changes during the grant cycle. This was particularly difficult at the principal's level since previous agreements concerning GEAR UP had to be renegotiated. For example, Beach Channel and Evander Childs each had four principals in less than two years. Columbus, Brandeis, Norman Thomas, the School for International Studies, and Global Studies had two leadership changes during the same time. Project staff from CUNY's Central Office visited high schools with college staff each time there was a leadership change to speak directly to the principal about the program. In all but one case, these efforts secured the necessary support for ongoing school-based GEAR UP programs.

In addition to organizational and leadership changes, five GEAR UP high schools were designated as “impact schools” by the Department of Education in early 2004. The result was an immediate increase in school safety officers, routine searches and scanning of personal belongings, and heightened monitoring of everyday life in the schools. “Impact” status frequently had a profound effect on student and staff morale. Students and staff were eager to leave school as soon as classes ended due to the heightened security atmosphere. At the same time, the eventual result of “impact” designation was often the development of a school environment more conducive to purposeful learning.

New Initiatives

One of the required components of all funded GEAR UP projects is the promotion of a college-going mindset in students and their families well before the 12th grade. This proved to be a major challenge across the CUNY GEAR UP consortium, as every partner high school lacked college advisement resources. Most large schools had one college advisor, who frequently had a caseload of more than 600 students. Some schools assigned teachers release time from one course in order to function as the school's college advisor in addition to their regular teaching requirements. At one school, there was no staff member assigned responsibility for college advisement of seniors, so students worked with volunteers or favorite teachers. College advisement almost never began before the 12th grade at most GEAR UP high schools.

To ensure that GEAR UP students and their families were well informed about college admission, financial aid, and college choices before 12th grade, the Central Office and college staffs launched a multifaceted college awareness initiative in 2003–2004. By the end of the project, the initiative's components included:

- assignment of college advisement mentors to seventeen partner high schools;
- computers and online resources for college research and federal financial aid filings;

- an interactive three-part college awareness workshop co-developed with CUNY's Office of Admissions Services;
- an increase in college trips to 2 and 4-year colleges in and around New York City;
- a spring break upstate New York college tour co-sponsored with the Commission on Independent Colleges and Universities (CICU);
- promotion of summer residential college camps outside of New York City;
- promotion of student youth opportunities through the National Council of Community and Education Partnerships (NCCEP);
- promotion of professional development and conferences by the College Board and the New York State Association of College and Admissions Counselors (NYSACAC);
- SAT exam and CUNY fee waivers;
- publication of a scholarship newsletter;
- development and launch of College Sense: How to Pay for College, an interactive financial aid Web tutorial in multiple languages;
- family financial aid workshops in 2004 and 2005, including drop-in nights at the CUNY Central Office for working family members;
- an award program for college-bound students; and
- a college survival guide and a college bridge weekend in July 2005.

THE centerpiece of this initiative was the hiring and training of seventeen college advisement mentors. Mentors were undergraduate or graduate students or retired advisement professionals who worked 15–18 hours per week at schools. Mentors met with students individually or in small groups to help them initiate and complete a college search and application process. Mentors worked either in guidance offices or in conjunction with the school's assigned college advisor. Strong personal relationships formed between students and their mentors, who helped with every aspect of the students' college application process.

Another important component of the college awareness initiative was to offer engaging college awareness and financial aid materials to students and their families. Students had complained to their mentors that the majority of college fairs and workshops were dull and that they didn't understand many terms being used. Central Office CUNY GEAR UP staff worked closely with admissions professionals at the University to develop an interactive workshop series that used role plays and small group work to explore college admissions fundamentals. Students at all high schools enjoyed the workshop format and were actively involved in all aspects. Parents and guardians attended

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Two of the biggest challenges were data management and reporting.

evening workshops and gave positive feedback to GU staff.

Another major tool was College Sense: How to Pay for College, a teen friendly interactive Web tutorial. Many GEAR UP students and their parents indicated that they were intimidated by financial aid terms and forms. This was especially true for families who were not native English speakers. College Sense attempted to demystify the process through six student characters presented on digital video. Student characters from a variety of ethnic backgrounds discuss how they made it to college and are financing their educations. Student sequences are available in Spanish, Chinese, and Russian. A CUNY financial aid director also answers frequently asked questions about opportunity programs, dependency, residency, and immigration status. The site has numerous links to financial aid forms, college search engines, and a senior year calendar. Focus groups with CUNY GEAR UP students and family members gave favorable feedback and found College Sense to be a very useful tool. The Web site went live in October 2004, and DVDs were distributed to GEAR UP partner high schools as well as to college advisement staff at high schools across New York State. Recently, College Sense has been linked to a citywide financial aid awareness campaign cosponsored by the New York Daily News and CUNY.

Organizational Improvements

At its inception, the Central Office had anticipated that local college programs would have a good deal of autonomy in terms of staffing, program design, delivery, and maintenance of program records. The Central Office's role would be limited to general project oversight, collection of final reports from colleges for state filing, and a few special consortium-wide projects. When the GEAR UP project encountered so many challenges right from the beginning of the grant cycle, however, it became clear that there was a need for stronger Central Office leadership to stabilize and improve the project.

Two of the biggest challenges were data management and reporting. GEAR UP projects were required to maintain specific activity and academic achievement data for each student. Both types of data were to be used to complete a complex federal Annual Performance Report.

In years one and two, the protocols for data collection and reporting were inadequate to ensure timely and accurate reports. In addition, college staff had considerable difficulties in collecting student academic and demographic data from high schools. Although each school had agreed to provide students' report cards for reporting purposes, in practice it was frequently difficult to obtain them.

In 2002–2003, the Central Office took steps to institute common data collection and reporting across the consortium. A new centralized database was designed to capture all information needed to run statistics for the Annual Performance Report each spring. College staff pro-

vided activity data on a trimester schedule to database staff at the Central Office. To alleviate the difficulties associated with the collection of paper report cards, the Project Director secured an agreement with the Department of Education Division of Assessment and Accountability (DAA) to provide all needed academic and demographic data electronically twice a year. The new database and the electronic academic data feed from the NYCDOE cut the amount of time it took to produce the report in half.⁵

Perhaps most importantly, the last two years of the project were marked by the development of an increasingly strong and effective partnership between the Central Office and the college-based staffs. That partnership allowed for real problems to be addressed and solutions developed. We believe that the evaluation report that follows, which is largely positive, documents the effectiveness of many people's hard work in taking a program with a shaky start and turning it into one of real substance and accomplishment.

What We've Learned

In the summer of 2004, GEAR UP staff from the colleges and CUNY's Central Office formed a work group to identify best practices and lessons learned from the project. What follows are brief summaries of the group's findings and recommendations, which are intended to inform the development of future multiyear projects spanning the middle through high school continuum.⁶

Cohort Models

A single-cohort model is only sensible if an entire grade can be served. Establishing program identity and delivering services to a small subset of an entire grade were almost impossible. School staff indicated ongoing frustration that GEAR UP services could not be offered to more students. In the interest of building strong relationships with school leaders, we believe that a full grade should be served. Adding a new cohort each subsequent year should only be considered if there is sufficient funding to fully staff the project.

Focus on 6th–12th or 7th–12th Grade Schools

Under the best of circumstances, a program such as GEAR UP is a labor-intensive endeavor that asks grantees to deliver a wide range of services using limited funding with the expectation of significant impact on the academic outcomes and ultimate college readiness of under prepared students. Such a program works best in settings where a few middle schools feed into no more than two or three high

In the interest of building strong relationships with school leaders, we believe that a full grade should be served.

⁵ For a complete list of academic and demographic data collected from the DAA, see page 22 in "Part I: Data Analysis" in "An Evaluation of GEAR UP."

⁶ CUNY submitted a proposal to the United States Department of Education in April 2005 for a six-year GEAR UP federal partnership grant as a consortium project. Although the federal proposal was not funded, this revised consortium design became the basis for the CUNY Middle Grades Initiative (MGI), which was inaugurated in September 2005.

We believe that an ideal structure for a multiyear project spanning the middle through high school continuum is to work with schools that serve the 6th–12th grades.

schools, with participating students comprising the majority of the 9th-grade class. This is clearly not typical of high schools in New York City, where 8th-grade students may currently apply to 12 high schools out of more than 250. In our case, working with a few middle schools that fed into many large high schools severely undermined the project. We believe that an ideal structure for a multiyear project spanning the middle through high school continuum is to work with schools that serve the 6th–12th grades. Based on published NYCDOE statistics, these schools had an average 75 percent retention rate between 8th and 9th grade and are thus very conducive to the development of effective long-term relationships.

Importance of School-Based Staff

Students were most responsive to GEAR UP offerings when they had the opportunity to develop strong personal connections to project staff they saw on a regular basis at their high school. As we learned from the focus groups conducted as part of the evaluation, students felt that their GEAR UP advisement mentors, coordinators, and tutors knew a great deal about them and supported them in ways that their school counselors and teachers at times could not. Students—at high schools served by colleges that relied upon GEAR UP staff who visited schools only intermittently—indicated that they did not have a strong sense of what the GEAR UP project was and did not participate in many non-classroom activities. We believe that visible and consistent presence of college staff in the schools is essential.

College Awareness in Middle School

Without exception, every student queried about what GEAR UP could have done better indicated a desire for more information about college at an earlier date, ideally before they started high school. We believe that the best way to help students become college ready is to help them see—through college advisement and mentoring in high school—the connections between their current study habits, their academic achievements, and their future career goals. Another important component is to make regular use of the partner campus to make college a concrete reality in the students' minds.

Strong Link Between Middle School and High School Programs

Our development of a post-GEAR UP CUNY Middle Grades Initiative gives us an opportunity to coordinate such a project with the College Now program. Students can be introduced to future College Now activities by 8th grade, have the chance to begin a sequence of non-credit workshops and high school credit courses beginning in 9th and 10th grades, and be academically proficient and eligible to take college credit courses in 11th grade. All students should be supported with advisement and tutoring throughout their College Now experiences.

Fall 2005 Update

As of September 2005, approximately 72% of the former CUNY GEAR UP cohort⁷ identified as “active” had received either a local or Regents-endorsed diploma. It is estimated that an additional 5% received a general equivalency diploma (GED). These figures may be slightly higher, as final academic records for summer 2005 had not been received from the NYCDOE at the time of publication.

More than 90% of those who graduated have reported to CUNY GEAR UP that they are currently attending college. The remaining 10% have indicated they intend to enroll in a college program at least part time in January 2006. Although GEAR UP was never utilized as a recruitment tool for the City University of New York, former cohort students are attending CUNY in large numbers, with GEAR UP represented at almost every CUNY college, including the Sophie Davis Biomedical program. Former CUNY GEAR UP students are also attending many State University of New York (SUNY) colleges, including Albany, Binghamton, and Stony Brook; many private New York universities and colleges including New York University, Syracuse University, Fordham University, Union College, St. John’s University, Ithaca College, and Pace University; and out-of-state colleges and universities including Rutgers University, Howard University, Pennsylvania State University, Ohio State University, Florida State University, and University of Pittsburgh.⁸

CUNY GEAR UP case managers maintain contact with former cohort students attending college in the metropolitan New York area by visiting college campuses on a rotating monthly basis to hold group forums to support students’ transition to college. Out-of-area students are regularly contacted by e-mail and phone. A holiday reunion was held in January 2006 and another is being planned for May of 2006. Most former students currently attending college have indicated their desire to remain in contact with CUNY GEAR UP staff, and many have volunteered to help with current initiatives serving younger students.

Approximately 15% of the former cohort returned to their last known high school in fall 2005 to work towards either a diploma or a GED. These non-graduates are receiving follow-up services from CUNY GEAR UP case managers, who visit the specific high schools⁹ to provide continued advisement and mentoring support. Most of these stu-

More than 90% of those who graduated have reported to CUNY GEAR UP that they are currently attending college.

⁷ By “former cohort” we mean students who were served by CUNY GEAR UP through August 31, 2005. “Active” is defined as still attending a CUNY GEAR UP partner high school and potentially able to participate in GEAR UP services in June 2005.

⁸ Colleges of enrollment may be compared to colleges of application on page 49 in “Part II: Focus Groups.”

⁹ Seven high schools with the largest numbers of non graduates were identified for follow-up services: the four George Washington schools, Christopher Columbus High School, School for International Studies, and Beach Channel High School.

dents indicate that they intend to earn a diploma rather than a GED, and expect to complete their graduation requirements no later than June 2006.¹⁰ Approximately 8% of the former cohort cannot be located despite multiple attempts by CUNY GEAR UP staff and school partners since July 2005. Our best guess is that many of these students moved and may have enrolled in job training programs that are not linked to the New York City Department of Education.

CUNY Middle Grades Initiative

In the absence of federal funding for a revised GEAR UP consortium project in 2005, CUNY moved forward with a University-funded initiative. The CUNY Middle Grades Initiative (MGI), a consortium of five colleges and the Office of Academic Affairs, was inaugurated in September 2005 and was forged from the successes and challenges identified in this report and through dialogue with college and school staff. MGI is designed to enrich students' middle grades experiences and to better prepare them for rigorous high school and college-level work. MGI is currently serving a cohort of 1,200 6th and 7th grade students at thirteen small secondary schools in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Queens. As with GEAR UP, these students will be followed from middle school into high school, with a strong focus on academic support, advisement, early college awareness and full articulation with CUNY College Now, the University's dual enrollment program. The Office of Academic Affairs is pursuing additional funding in order to serve incoming cohorts of students or expand the model to additional school and college partners.

MGI is designed to enrich students' middle grades experiences and to better prepare them for rigorous high school and college-level work.

¹⁰ According to our case managers, 38 former cohort students graduated with diplomas in February 2006 from the seven target high schools.

An Evaluation of GEAR UP

CORINNE BARON-DONOVAN

Executive Summary

TWO individual studies are combined here into a final report on CUNY GEAR UP (GU), reflecting information gathered from different sources of data. The reports are produced from:

1. Archival data from GU activity records and academic and demographic records from the New York City Department of Education (DOE); and
2. Feedback from GU students obtained from focus groups.

This study specifically sought qualitative feedback from students in the program in addition to analyzing the quantitative data outcomes (student GPA, attendance, and graduation rates) in order to determine both the successes and challenges of the GEAR UP program.

Part I: Data Analysis Summary

Using a quasi-control group design, the data analysis evaluation allowed a comparison of outcomes for students from similar high schools and backgrounds. Students who participated in GEAR UP activities ($n = 2,449$) were compared with students who did not participate in activities ($n = 1,029$) over a four-year period from fall 2000–spring 2004 (students were in 8th–11th grades during this time). The analysis controlled for differences in GPA by race (GU had a stronger impact on Asian and white students' GPA than it did for black and Hispanic students' GPA) and special education status¹¹ (GU had a stronger impact on non-special education students' GPA than special education students' GPA). It revealed that GU had a statistically and academically significant impact on student GPA. The analysis also revealed that GU had a statistically significant impact on student attendance rates (after controlling for differences in attendance by age and special education status).

The original and adjusted values (after controlling for differences by demographics) are displayed in the following table:

		GU Students	Non-GU Students
Grade Point Average (GPA)	Original Avg.	69.19	62.03
	Adjusted Avg. (after controlling for differences)	68.79	62.98
Attendance Rate	Original Avg.	82.71	73.48
	Adjusted Avg. (after controlling for differences)	82.73	73.63

GEAR UP had a statistically and academically significant impact on student GPA.

¹¹ Special education status was defined as any student with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) on file with the New York City Department of Education.

Students expressed sincere gratitude for the GU staff, indicating that they felt closer to and better known by the GU staff than by some of their teachers.

In addition to significant differences in outcomes between GU and non-GU students, the data analysis revealed a significant correlation¹² between the number of GU activities and both outcomes (GPA and Attendance Rate). In other words, the more a student participated, the greater the impact. These findings are noted statistically as follows—

- GPA: $r = .263$ ($p = .000$, $n = 2,444$)
- Attendance Rate: $r = .261$ ($p = .000$, $n = 2,356$)

—where r = correlation coefficient; p = p value, which indicates the level of statistical significance for the test (if a test is not significant in this report, it will be noted); n = number of data points in the analysis.

Part 2: Focus Group Summary

In focus groups, students' attitudes evidenced appreciation for the GU program. Students expressed sincere gratitude for the GU staff, indicating that they felt closer to and better known by the GU staff than by some of their teachers. They appreciated the concern shown for them by GU staff, who followed up on both academic and non-academic matters. Students emphasized that the GU program provided a realistic preview of college life through its college trips. GU also provided guidance and mentoring through the application process, and helped students feel confident in their ability to go to college. While students from all partner high schools valued the help GU provided for college preparation, they felt that more emphasis was needed in this area. On the negative side, students expressed concern about the lack of space in their schools for certain GEAR UP activities and about not having the opportunity or in some cases not hearing about available opportunities in time to take part.

Highlights of Positive Feedback

- The value of college tours/visits:
Students agreed that these trips enhanced their understanding of college life. It provided them with realistic previews of the colleges, and allowed students to assess schools on attributes such as prevailing weather, food, living spaces, teachers, and student body demographics that were often not easily or accurately portrayed in school literature.
- The value of all GEAR UP services:
Students appreciated all that GU offered, and believed that they would not be as well off today if they had not participated in this program.

¹² Correlations measure the relationship between variables, indicating the degree to which they are associated, or "go together." A correlation coefficient provides two pieces of information: the strength and direction of the relationship. Strength of correlations are determined by the value, and can range from 0.0 – 1.0. 0.0 indicates that the variables are not related at all and thus there is a weak relationship or no relationship, and 1.0 indicates that the variables are completely related and thus there is a strong relationship. Correlations can be positive or negative; positive correlations indicate that the variables change in the same direction (as one increases, the other increases) and negative correlations indicate that the variables change in opposite directions (as one increases, the other decreases).

Highlights of Critical Feedback

- The lack of uniformity in services provided by various college programs:

Students observed and reported that the types of activities offered between programs differed, such as access to sports and resources at the affiliated college (libraries, etc. on college campuses).

Students also seemed to notice a difference in the number and types of college trips offered at other GU high schools, and felt that it would have been nice to have more consistent offerings across the CUNY consortium even if there was the need to combine with other GU schools to make such activities economically feasible.

- The lack of physical space within schools:

Some schools had a GU office, library, or lounge for students, while others did not. This provided a noticeable difference in students' access to both human and physical resources such as computers and study aids. Students also mentioned that the lack of space prevented them from having a quiet area to focus on schoolwork.

- The need for increased public relations:

Students said that they would have liked more information about GU activities. Many students said they heard about activities too late or sometimes not at all. Students also suggested having more in-depth information sessions earlier in high school for both students and parents to learn more about GU offerings and activities.

Some schools had a GEAR UP office, library, or lounge for students, while others did not. This provided a noticeable difference in students' access to both human and physical resources such as computers and study aids.

In spring 2003, GEAR UP secured an agreement with the NYCDOE Division of Assessment and Accountability to collect student data electronically twice each year.

PART I: Data Analysis

PART I of this report on data will be presented in four sections, which will be followed in Part II by a report on Student Focus Groups. The first section of Part I will provide information on data records, both those collected and maintained in the GEAR UP data base and those acquired from the New York City Department of Education as a supplement to the GEAR UP data. The second section will provide student demographic information; the third section contains information on student GEAR UP activities. The fourth and last section on data will present student outcomes and analyses of those outcomes.

Section One: Information on Records

This first section provides information about CUNY GEAR UP (GU) students from records maintained in a centralized GU database. CUNY GEAR UP collected academic and demographic data from the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) for every student ever connected to GU since its inception in 2000–01. From 2001–2003, college staff collected academic and basic demographic data directly from high schools in the form of report cards and information provided by school guidance staff. Data included course names and grades, credits earned, attendance records, grade level, race, gender, and address and telephone of record for each student. Special education, limited English proficiency (LEP), and free or reduced-price lunch status was determined for reporting purposes were gathered as aggregate statistics for each high school from the most recently published NYCDOE School Report Card.

In spring 2003, GU secured an agreement with the NYCDOE Division of Assessment and Accountability (DAA) to collect student data electronically twice each year. Data were identified based on student OSIS numbers, extracted and transmitted from the DAA to the GU database. After this agreement was secured, GU was able to gather more specific academic and demographic data for each student. Additional academic data included credits attempted for each course; standardized test scores; grade level of record (as of most recent official NYCDOE “condition” report); native language; country of origin; special education status; English Language Learner (ELL) status; and free or reduced-price lunch status. GU made a retroactive request to the DAA to update all GU students’ records back to the 2000–01 school year and received more than 95% of all data requested.

There were 2,500 GU students active in the program at some level since its inception in 2000–2001.

GEAR UP began activities with students in the 8th grade and was designed to follow most of the same cohort of students through high

school (see Section Three, page 27 for activity descriptions). Some students who were eligible to participate in GU and did so at an original middle/lower school were not served as they progressed into and through high school. When the original cohort of students from 8th grade moved into 9th grade, they dispersed into more than 140 different high schools throughout the city, and it was not possible to provide services to all of the original students. From that group, 23 high schools were selected where there would be a significant percentage of GU student matriculation. In addition, some of the high school classes were eventually adopted en masse to receive services to make up for those students who were lost from the original group with the goal of providing service to a similar number of students (see page 5 in “A History of the Project” for a table of GEAR UP programs by college and high school partners). Activity data was extracted from the GU database for analysis during the fall of 2004, reflecting data through (and including) the summer of 2004.

Approximately 3,700 students were eligible to participate in the program at one point or another. Of those students, approximately 2,500 did participate in at least one GU activity over the past four years. Of these 2,500, all but 51 were found on NYCDOE records and were identified as GU students ($n = 2,449$). An additional 165 students (who did not participate in GU) were not found on NYCDOE records either. The remaining students who have records on file from the NYCDOE have been used as a quasi-control group. They are students who were eligible for GU, but did not participate in any activity. There are slightly more than 1,000 ($n = 1,029$) non-GU students.

When the original cohort of students from 8th grade moved into 9th grade, they dispersed into more than 140 different high schools throughout the city.

	Frequency	Percent
GU Students on NYCDoE file	2,449	66.3
GU Students <i>not</i> on NYCDoE file	51	1.4
Non-GU Students on NYCDoE file	1,029	27.9
Non-GU Students <i>not</i> on NYCDoE file	165	4.5
Total	3,694	100.0

Academic Records

	GEAR UP Students				Non-GEAR UP Students			
	N	Min	Max	Mean	N	Min	Max	Mean
Total Semesters on File	2443	1	14	7.59	1029	1	14	6.73
Count of Grade Levels	2443	1	5	2.88	1029	1	5	2.46
Number of semesters per grade level	2443	1.00	11.00	2.77	1029	1	11	2.82

Assuming two semesters per year, we had four years of academic data for the average GEAR UP student.

- The GU students had a minimum of 1 academic record (1 semester worth of data) and a maximum of 14 records on file, with an average of 8 records. Assuming 2 semesters per year, we had 4 years of academic data for the average GU student.
- GU students had between 1 and 5 grade levels on file (8th grade, 9th grade, etc.) corresponding to these academic records.
- GU students had between 1 and 11 records that specifically corresponded to 1 grade, with an average of about 3. This indicates that students either had some summer academics on file, or took slightly longer than 1 academic year to move from 1 grade to the next in high school.

(See Appendix A [p. 50] for more information on the number of records from the NYC Department of Education file and the number of grade levels on file.)

Section Two: Student Demographic Information

Demographic Characteristics of GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP Students

The following five tables provide descriptive statistics (with data reported as % [frequency]) on the demographic characteristics of GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP students as of fall 2004.

Table 7

Age	GU Student	Non-GU Student	Total
< 17	2.2% (76)	1.0% (26)	3.0% (102)
18	66.4% (1627)	65% (668)	66% (2295)
19	22.3% (547)	28.3% (291)	24.1% (838)
20	6.8% (166)	4.1% (42)	6% (208)
21 +	1.3% (33)	.1% (1)	1.0% (34)
	70.4% (2449)	29.6% (1028)	100% (3477)

Table 8

Gender	GU Student	Non-GU Student	Total
Female	51.7% (1266)	49.4% (508)	51% (1774)
Male	48.3% (1183)	50.6% (520)	49% (1703)
	70.4% (2449)	29.6% (1028)	100% (3477)

Table 9

Race	GU Student	Non GU Student	Total
Hispanic	42.3% (1036)	62.4% (641)	48.2% (1677)
Black, Non-Hispanic	31.5% (771)	28.7% (295)	30.7% (1066)
White, Non-Hispanic	20.0% (491)	6.1% (63)	15.9% (554)
Asian or Pacific Islander	5.6% (136)	2.5% (26)	4.7% (162)
Native American or Alaskan Native	.6% (14)	.1% (1)	.4% (15)
Unknown	.0% (1)	.2% (2)	.1% (3)
	70.4% (2449)	29.6% (1028)	100.0% (3477)

Table 10

Special Education Indicator ¹⁴	GU Student	Not GU	Total
No	95.3% (2383)	91.1% (937)	94.1% (3320)
Special Ed	4.7% (117)	8.9% (91)	5.9% (208)
	70.9% (2500)	29.1% (1028)	3528

Table 11

Mean Percentage Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Eligible	GU Student	Not GU Student
	46.38%	47.74%

Typical CUNY GEAR UP Student in Fall 2004:

- 18 years old
- female
- Hispanic

¹⁴ Any student with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) on file with the NYCDOE.

Demographic Characteristics of GEAR UP Students Only by College Program¹⁵

The following two tables provide descriptive statistics (with data reported as % [frequency]) on the demographic characteristics of GEAR UP students only by college program location as of fall 2004:

Table 12: Gender, Special Education Status, Free Lunch Eligibility, and Age

GU Program		Brooklyn	CO 1 (GW)	CO 2 (non GW)	CSI	Hunter	Lehman	NYCCT	Queens	York	Total	Citywide
Gender	Female	42.1% (120)	45.6% (88)	66.9% (97)	51.8% (425)	48.3% (71)	53.8% (168)	61% (100)	69% (78)	47% (70)	52.3% (1217)	49.6%
	Male	57.9% (165)	54.4% (105)	33.1% (48)	48.2% (396)	51.7% (76)	46.2% (144)	39% (64)	31% (35)	53% (79)	47.7% (47.7)	50.4%
Special Education	No	95.2% (278)	91.8% (180)	89% (130)	97.6% (808)	96.6% (143)	94.7% (302)	95.9% (165)	100% (119)	91.3% (137)	95.4% (2262)	
	Yes	4.8% (14)	8.2% (16)	11% (16)	2.4% (20)	3.4% (5)	5.3% (17)	4.1% (7)	0% (0)	8.7% (13)	4.6% (108)	
Mean % Eligibly for Free or Reduced-price Lunch		55.1%	71.5%	47.9%	34.3%	49.6%	41.2%	55.3%	61.9%	56.9%	46.9%	54%
Average Age (as of summer 2004)		18.87	18.34	18.32	18.26	18.31	18.29	18.38	18.09	18.30	18.35	

Table 13: Race

GU Program	Brooklyn	CO1 (GW)	CO2 (non GW)	CSI	Hunter	Lehman	NYCCT	Queens	York	Total	Citywide
Asian/Pacific Islander	.7% (2)	0% (0)	2.8% (4)	7% (57)	3.4% (5)	3.9% (12)	6.2% (10)	29.2% (33)	3.4% (5)	5.5% (128)	14.1%
Hispanic	68.8% (194)	97.4% (188)	72% (103)	20.2% (165)	72.4% (105)	41.6% (129)	49.4% (80)	15.9% (18)	17.4% (26)	43.5% (1008)	34.7%
Black	29.4% (83)	2.1% (4)	21% (30)	27.6% (226)	16.6% (24)	45.2% (140)	34% (55)	50.4% (57)	69.1% (103)	31.2% (722)	35.1%
White	1.1% (3)	.5% (1)	4.2% (6)	45.2% (370)	7.6% (11)	9.4% (29)	10.5% (17)	4.4% (5)	10.1% (15)	19.7% (457)	16.1%

¹⁵ The Central Office GU program was organized in two parts: CO 1 = students at the four George Washington Education Complex (GW) high schools; and CO 2 = non-George Washington students. This division was made due to the location and orientation of GU within these schools. The four GW schools had the largest concentration of the Central Office GU cohort, were located in one building in Washington Heights, and were served by a school-based GU coordinator and a part-time staff of 8 tutors and advisors. The three non-GW schools had small GU cohorts, were in various locations across Manhattan, and were served by a program coordinator who visited schools 1-2 times each week with some support from part-time tutors and advisors. See Appendix B (p. 51) for Percent of Students Eligible for Free Lunch by GEAR UP Program location.)

Section Three: Information on GEAR UP Activities

The table below lists and defines each GEAR UP activity. Student participation in an individual activity was counted as one activity with variably determined hours.

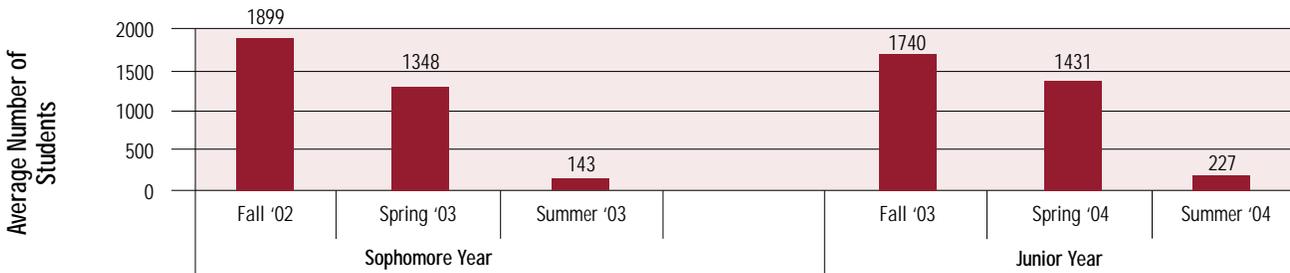
Table 14

GU Activity	Description
Class Instruction	Instruction delivered by teachers who had participated in a curriculum development program offered through the College of Staten Island Discovery Institute (CSIDI). Students were counted as receiving "class instruction" if they were in a regularly scheduled HS class that had been re-developed by a teacher who had participated in a semester long curriculum development program run by CSIDI.
College Visits	Visits to local and regional colleges. Visits ranged from day-long trips from school to weekend trips to week-long tours over school breaks.
College Advising	Student programs focused on college advisement, individual or group sessions. Students were provided with advisement and counseling on topics such as academics, writing samples (letters of interest, personal statements), the application process, and financial aid.
Computer Assisted Lab	Student programs set in computer labs that explored Web-based college advisement and preparation tools such as The College Board's MY ROAD, HESC's New York Mentor, and CUNY GEAR UP's College Sense: How to Pay for College.
Cultural Events	Student attendance at plays, spoken word and stand-up comedy events, music and dance performances; weekend events included parents/family members.
Educational Field Trips	Student trips to museums, historical landmarks, and other educational locations.
Family Activity	Events offered to the families of GU students, including: informational workshops on financial aid, the college application process, New York City graduation requirements, and award and recognition programs honoring student achievement.
HS Credit Classes taken at Postsecondary Institutions	Student participation in classes through CUNY College Now at CUNY colleges that were eligible for HS credit (e.g. SAT preparation).
Job Visits	Student visits to job sites such as hospitals to shadow professionals in their work; job sites were selected based on the focus of the school.
Materials Development & Other	Three types: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. College credit courses through CUNY College Now (offered at high school and college locations); 2. Special project-based learning workshops such as theater production, filmmaking, video, newspaper, DVD yearbook, career days, and health fairs that ended with a culminating project or event; 3. Weekly group sessions with students focused on social issues (led by staff with counseling and social work training).
Summer Programs	Three Types: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Academic programs on college campuses during July and August; most were residential programs at regional colleges ranging in length from two days to 6 weeks, or local day programs at CUNY colleges through College Now; 6-week regional and some local day programs were college-credit bearing. 2. Mandated academic programs at partner high schools to catch up on missing credits and/or make up failed classes. Programs lasted 6 weeks. 3. Special programs such as paid internships or attendance to student conferences such as the Youth Summit through the National Council of Community and Education Partnerships (NCCPEP).
Tutoring	Academic support in class and/or after school.
Workshops	Non-credit workshops for students focused on specific subject area and SAT and New York State Regents' exam preparation.

The following four tables present various patterns of GEAR UP student participation by trimester (fall, spring, summer), the periods for which CUNY GEAR UP collected activity data from partner colleges.

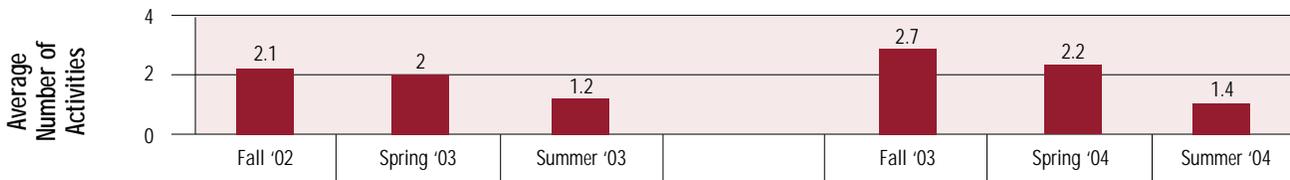
Student Activity Frequencies by Trimester

Table 15: Student Activity Participation in GEAR UP: Sophomore – Junior Years



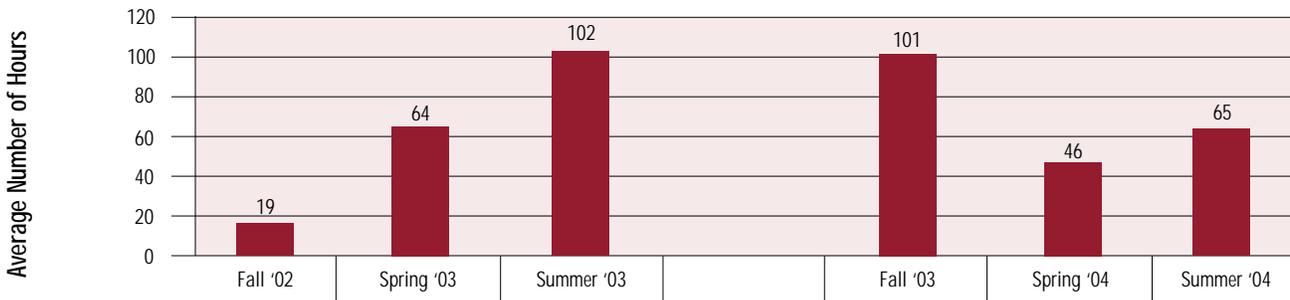
Student Activity Participation Rates by Trimester

Table 16: GEAR UP Student Participation Rate: Sophomore – Junior Years



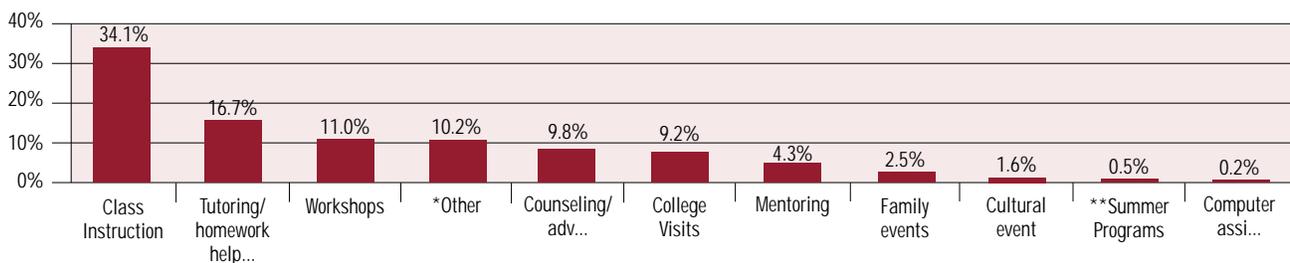
Student Activity Participation Hours by Trimester

Table 17: GEAR UP Student Activity Participation Rate: Sophomore – Junior Years



Student Participation Rates by Activity

Table 18: GEAR UP Activity Participation: Sophomore – Junior Years



The table above shows the percentage of students who participated in each activity through sophomore and junior years (fall '02, spring '03, summer '03, fall '03, spring '04, summer '04) and the frequency of their participation. For example, if a student participated in college visits three times over the 6 trimesters, each of the 3 college visits was counted in that category.

* The *Other* category includes the following among its activities: Internships, Health Fair, Clubs, Awards Ceremonies, Arts Programs, and Various Classes (GU English, SAT Prep).

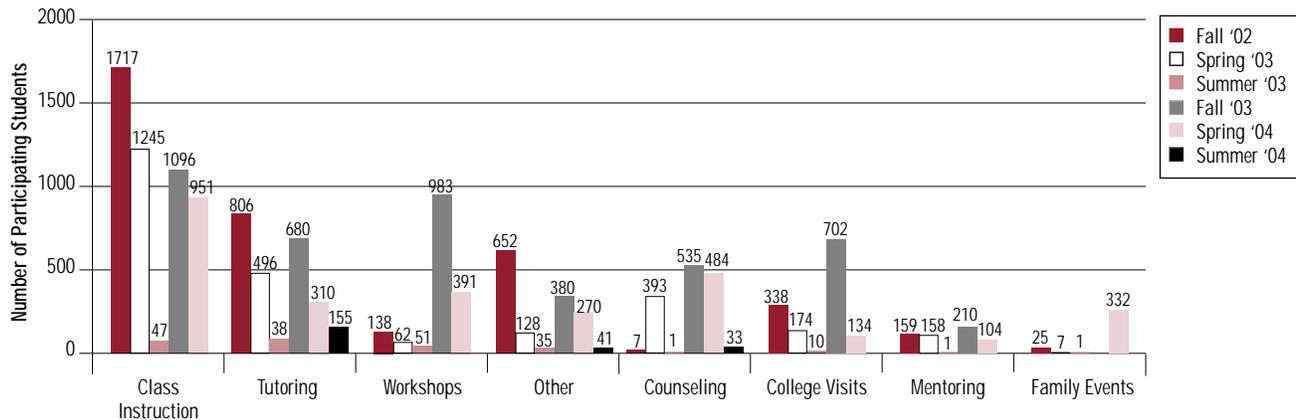
** A number of factors may have led to the low participation in the summer programs. Summer programs almost exclusively took place on college campuses (CUNY and New York State partners), and had participation limits due to funding and space constraints. The NY State partner colleges were required to distribute available slots across the various NY GEAR UP programs. The summer programs also required travel out of the New York metropolitan area with overnight stays between 3 days and 6 weeks.

Table 19: Activity Counts

Activity	# Non Duplicated Students
Other	1199
Workshops	1141
Tutoring	1135
Class Instruction	1128
College Advising	928
College Visits	919
Family Activity	365
Mentoring	354
Culture Event	220
Summer Programs	67
Computer Lab	46
	7502

Summer programs almost exclusively took place on college campuses (CUNY and New York State partners), and had participation limits due to funding and space constraints.

Table 20: GEAR UP Student Activity by Trimester



This table tracks the levels of student participation by various activities from fall 2002 through summer 2004. (See Appendix C [p.50] for more data on GEAR UP student participation in GU activities from spring 2001 through summer 2004.) Among the notable patterns are the following:

- The decrease in tutoring in fall 2003 is attributable in part to the late start of programs following the NYCDOE reorganization and the need to secure permissions from NYCDOE Regional leaders for GU academic support programs.
- The increase in workshops in fall 2003 is attributable in part to the implementation of project-based learning activities and college awareness workshops.
- The increase in counseling in fall 2003 and spring 2004 is attributable to implementation of consortium-wide college advisement mentor initiative.
- The increase in college visits in fall 2003 is attributable to the heightened focus on the college search process as students entered their junior year.
- The notable increase in family events in spring 2004 is due to a consortium-wide focus on financial aid and the college application process.

Section Four: Analyses of Student Outcomes

This section provides descriptive and inferential statistical analyses in two areas:

- 1) GEAR UP vs. non-GEAR UP student outcomes comparison; and
- 2) GEAR UP student outcomes only.

The GEAR UP vs. non-GEAR UP comparisons look at two kinds of outcome data: GPA and attendance rates. The GEAR UP student only analyses include the relationships between GEAR UP activity with GPA and attendance rates (program-wide), as well as descriptions of comparisons within the GU program by college location.

Analysis of GEAR UP and Non-GEAR UP Student Outcomes

This section compares GU students with a quasi-control group of non-GU students. The non-GU students are those from the original cohort of middle schools who either went to non-participating GU high schools or to high schools where GU was offered, but they did not participate in the activities. The outcomes of interest in this section are GPA (grade point average) and attendance rates.

Were there differences between GEAR UP and non-GEAR UP student outcomes?

Grade Point Average (GPA)

Descriptive Analysis

- For the 2,444 GU students, GPA's ranged from 23.8 to 99, with an average of 69.2.
- For non-GU students GPAs ranged from 17.92–95.19 with an average of 62.07.

	55 or less	56–65	66–75	76–85	86 +	Total	Min GPA	Max GPA
GU Students	11.5% (281)	27.4% (669)	29.7% (727)	20.8% (508)	10.6% (259)	100% (2,444)	23.8	99.0
Non-GU students	35.3% (363)	30.1% (309)	19.9% (205)	10.9% (112)	3.8% (39)	100% (1,028)	17.92	95.19

Comparison Analysis

Two demographic variables had an interaction with student GU status when comparing GPA:

- race
- special education status

The non-GEAR UP students are those from the original cohort of middle schools who either went to non-participating GEAR UP high schools or to high schools where GEAR UP was offered, but they did not participate in the activities.

Two demographic variables did not interact with student GU status when comparing GPA (age and gender). Thus, GU students and non-GU students did not differ by age or gender. (See Appendix D [p. 53] for details of these analyses.)

Controlling for Differences

When race and special education status were controlled for, GU continued to have a significant impact on students' GPA.¹⁶

“Controlling for” means that the original means for GPA (for GU and non-GU students) were adjusted based on differences of effect on race and special education status, and a comparison was made on the adjusted GPAs.

Table 22	Original Avg GPA	Adjusted Avg GPA	Difference	N
GU Students	69.19	68.79	-.43	2444
Non-GU students	62.03	62.98	1.04	1028

There was a statistically significant difference between these adjusted means (when initial differences were controlled).

Semester Attendance Rates

Descriptive Analysis

Table 23	GEAR UP Students				Non-GEAR UP Students			
	N	Min	Max	Mean	N	Min	Max	Mean
Average Attendance Rate (% school days attended, based on 90-day semester)	2,356	23%	96.4%	83.6%	1007	0	98.9%	75.3%

- Of the 2,356 GU students with attendance records on file, the average student was in school 83.6% of the semester, based on a 90-day semester.
- Of the 1007 non-GU students with attendance records on file, the average student was in school 75.3% of the semester.

Comparison Analysis

Two variables had an interaction with student GU status when comparing attendance rates:

- age
- special education status

When race and special education status were controlled for, GEAR UP continued to have a significant impact on students' GPA.

¹⁶ $F(1, 3450) = 183.68, p < .001$. This F value is the statistical data produced as a result of an Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA). ANCOVA is used to test the equality of means between groups while controlling for any initial statistical differences between these groups. When this value is greater than a critical F value, researchers can conclude that there are significant statistical differences between the groups. If the value is less than the critical value, then we can conclude that the groups do not differ from each other.

Two demographic variables did not interact with student GU status when comparing attendance rates (race and gender). Thus, GU students and non-GU students did not differ by race or gender. (See Appendix B [p. 51] for details of these analyses.)

Controlling for Differences

When age and special education status were controlled for, GU continued to have a significant impact on students' attendance rates.¹⁷

“Controlling for” means that the original attendance rates (for GU and non-GU students) were adjusted based on differences in age and special education status and a comparison was made on the adjusted attendance rates.

The adjusted means after controlling for these variables were:

Table 24	Original Average Attendance Rate	Adjusted Average Attendance Rate	Difference	N
GU Students	82.71	82.73	-.021	2356
Non-GU Students	73.48	73.63	.144	1007

Note: The citywide attendance rate was 84.7% for the 2002-2003 school year. For these particular 23 high schools, the attendance ranged from 71.5% to 93.7% based on NYCDOE data.

Analysis of GEAR UP-only Student Outcomes

This section looks at data from GU students only. We first look at activity data to see if there are relationships between the number and frequency of GU activities and student outcomes (GPA and attendance rates). Following those analyses we describe comparisons of GU student outcomes between the nine GU college programs.

Do GEAR UP student outcomes relate to GU activities?

Descriptive Analysis

Table 25	GEAR UP Student Activity Data			
	N	Min	Max	Mean
Total Activity Hours	2,500	1	2,373	293.74
Total Activities	2,500	1	59	11.57

- GU students were involved in between 1 and 59 GU activities for 2000–2004, with an average participation rate of 12 activities over these years. For the purposes of this evaluation and statistical analysis, participation was counted as one activity with variably determined hours.

GEAR UP students were involved in between 1 and 59 GEAR UP activities for 2000–2004, with an average participation rate of 12 activities over these years.

¹⁷ $F(1, 3359) = 296.68, p = .001.$

- GU students spent anywhere from 1 hour to over 2,300 hours in these activities over the past 4 years. The average student spent about 300 hours in activities in that time.
- The highest hours were primarily for students whose teachers were involved in CSI’s Discovery Institute curriculum development workshops (redeveloped high school core subject classes); were involved in summer workshops and programs at colleges (some of which lasted as long as 6 weeks); or were involved in the mentoring program at one high school in particular.

Was there a relationship between GEAR UP activity and GPA?

Yes—there was a significant and positive relationship between the *Number of GEAR UP Activities* students were involved in and their GPA. This means that the more GU activities students were involved in, the higher their GPAs and vice versa. This finding *does not mean* that one caused the other, however.

$$r = .263 (p = .000, n=2444)$$

There was also a significant and positive relationship between the *Number of Hours* students spent in GEAR UP activities and their GPA. This means that the more hours students spent in GU activities, the higher their GPAs and vice versa. This finding *does not mean* that one caused the other, however.

$$r = .240 (p = .000, n=2444)$$

All but two activities were positively correlated with GPA; as the number of hours in each activity increased, so did GPA.

*Table 26: GEAR UP Activities That Have a Significant Relationship with Overall GPA**

Activity	N	r	P value
Class Instruction***	1109	.36	.01
Summer Programs	61	.32	.01
College Visits	898	.16	.01
Materials Development & Other	1162	.14	.01
College Advising**	1138	-.11	.01
Workshops**	1065	-.11	.01

There was a significant and positive relationship between the number of GEAR UP activities students were involved in and their GPA . . . [and] between the number of hours students spent in GEAR UP activities and their GPA.

* GPA is accumulated over time. Overall GPA was calculated for the purposes of this analysis using all academic data on file through summer 2004.

** These activities had a negative relationship with GPA: the more students were involved in these activities, the lower their GPA. Since the neediest students (academically) may have been targeted to receive advising and participate in workshops, lower GPA may have been associated with pre-existing academic skill levels. We had no basis to conclude that these activities caused a lower GPA.

***Class instruction included curriculum development for teachers, such that the student activity was provided by improved teacher preparation or influenced by revised curriculum.

Table 27: GEAR UP Activities That Did Not Have a Significant Relationship with Overall GPA

Activity	N	r	P value
Unknown	20	-.068	.776
Computer Assisted Lab	43	-.014	.931
Job Visits	24	-.214	.315
Educational Field Trips	6	—	—
Cultural Events	216	-.058	.394
Family Activity	260	.023	.714
HS Credit Classes taken at Postsecondary Institutions	88	-.150	.163
Tutoring	1205	.016	.571

Was there a relationship between GEAR UP Activity and Attendance Rate?

Yes—there was a significant and positive relationship between the *Number of GEAR UP Activities* students were involved in and their attendance rate. This means that the more GU activities students were involved in, the better their school attendance and vice versa. This finding *does not mean* that one caused the other, however.

$$r = .261 \text{ (} p = .000, n = 2356 \text{)}$$

There was also a significant and positive relationship between the *Number of Hours* students spent in GEAR UP activities and their attendance rate. This means that the more hours students spent in GU activities, the better their attendance and vice versa. This finding *does not mean* that one caused the other, however.

$$r = .195 \text{ (} p = .000, n = 2356 \text{)}$$

There was a significant and positive relationship between the number of GEAR UP activities students were involved in and their attendance rate . . . [and] between the number of hours students spent in GEAR UP activities and their attendance rate.

When compared overall and individually by college program the GEAR UP students had a higher GPA than non-GEAR UP students.

Comparative Data on GEAR UP Students

A number of analyses were conducted comparing GEAR UP students program-to-program on such metrics as on-track to graduate, GPA, and attendance rates. In fairness to the individual programs, each of which had a unique set of high school partners and circumstances, and factors we neither studied nor controlled for, we will report our findings in the aggregate as ranges from high to low.

1) Comparison of GU College Partners: Students On-track to Graduate

On Track to Graduate is defined as:

- accumulation of at least 44 credits (covering English, math, science, social studies, and electives); and
- a score of 55 or greater on the following 5 Regent exams: Math A, Global Studies, English, United States History, and 1 Science. (Minimum graduation requirements for a local diploma established by the NYCDOE.)

When all students who participated in GU since fall 2003 (after sophomore year) were considered ($n = 2494$):

- 71.4% were on track to graduate upon examination of academic records on file with CUNY GU as of June 1, 2005, compared to the citywide average of 54.3 % , the most recent published 4-year graduation rate (for the 2004 New York City graduating class).
- On-track to graduate rates ranged from a high of 92% to a low of 49% by GU college site. This was due to several factors, including the overall coherence of the academic program in place at individual high schools; the number of high schools served by the GU site, which ranged from 1-7; and the nature and quality of the GU services offered at individual high schools.
- CUNY Central Office high schools were recombined to form one site for on-track to graduate analysis.

2) Comparison of GU Colleges: GPA

After controlling for differences in age, gender, free lunch eligibility, and on-track to graduate, we determined a range of adjusted GPA from a high of 76.56 to a low of 64.22. Please note that while there were some statistical differences between GU programs on average GPA, the actual range was only 12 points. Furthermore, even the lowest average GPA of 64.22 would qualify for a NYS regent high school diploma if their Regents test scores were in the same range.

What stands out about this analysis is that, combined with the earlier (GU vs. non-GU comparison), despite the wide range of initial demographic and academic differences between GU high schools, there was still an effect by this program on GPA. In other words, when compared overall and individually by college program the GU students had a higher GPA than non-GU students.

3) Comparison of GU Colleges: Attendance Rates

After controlling for differences in age, free lunch eligibility, and on-track to graduate status, there continued to be differences in attendance rates by GU site¹⁸ that ranged from a high of 88.39 to a low of 78.84.

Please note that, again, there were some statistical differences between GU program locations. The actual range between the highest average attendance rate and the lowest is less than 10 days.

Additionally, when combined with the prior comparison of GU and non-GU student outcomes, despite the wide range of initial demographic and academic differences between GU high schools, there was still an effect of this program on attendance rates. In other words, when compared overall and individually by program, the GU students had a better attendance rate than non-GU students.

When compared overall and individually by program, the GEAR UP students had a better attendance rate than non-GEAR UP students.

¹⁸ F (8,2226) = 12.32, p = .001.

PART II: Student Focus Groups

Purpose

THE purpose of this study was to gather feedback from students involved in CUNY GEAR UP to help evaluate the effectiveness of the project and to enhance future CUNY collaborative programming. To gather feedback from students, a series of focus groups were held.

Focus groups were conducted in February 2005 with GU students linked to 7 of the 8 GU colleges, representing 11 of the 23 high schools. Focus groups ranged in size from 6–17, with an average of 11 students. One scheduled focus group had only 1 student show up, so this group was turned into a one-on-one interview. This student's answers are grouped with the others to maintain anonymity. A total of 70 students participated, 53 percent of whom were female.

Student Selection & Procedures

Possible participants were selected from a random list of students with an equal percentage of high, medium, and low GU activity levels. Students were sent a flyer indicating the date and time of each focus group along with consent forms. Interested students called the researcher to register. Reminder calls took place 1–2 days prior to each focus group.

Focus groups took place after school hours in a location convenient for all students, either at a partner high school or on one of the college campuses. Students were paid \$20 in exchange for 1 hour of participation. The researcher facilitated each focus group, explained the purpose to students and reminded them that their answers would remain confidential. Students' and parents' signed consent forms were collected prior to beginning the focus group. Some forms were mailed or faxed to the researcher prior to the focus group. All questions were answered about the process (only minor administrative questions were asked). A second person from the Collaborative Programs Central Office took notes. The researcher asked for clarification if an answer was unclear and occasionally probed for more details. Much of the original language was recorded to accurately represent the students' thoughts and opinions. None of the local GU staff was present during the focus groups to ensure that students would provide honest and open feedback.

Students were asked a series of pre-determined questions. Questions were asked in the order they appear below, followed in this report by a summary of the answers. There were three general topics discussed, with one or more questions for each section:

- 1) Describing GEAR UP
- 2) Evaluating GEAR UP
- 3) Assessing GEAR UP Outcomes

Focus groups were conducted in February 2005 with GEAR UP students linked to seven of the eight GEAR UP colleges, representing 11 of the 23 high schools. Focus groups ranged in size from 6–17, with an average of 11 students.

We report these findings here as close paraphrases with generous samplings of direct quotes, because we believe this relatively unfiltered presentation gives voice to the students GEAR UP served and should be given serious consideration in evaluating the impact of the program. Nevertheless, we also believe it is important for readers to keep in mind the different experiences students had and recounted in their focus groups that shaped their perspectives and informed their opinions on any particular subject. Taken collectively, the focus groups do convey the value students attributed to their GEAR UP activities.

Describing GEAR UP

QUESTION 1

Students were asked to describe GEAR UP in their own words.

Students responded that GU helps them with the college process by providing tutoring, help with improving grades, help passing required tests, research on colleges, organizing college trips and tours, offering SAT prep, SAT fee waivers, explanations of financial aid, workshops for students and families, help with college applications and guidance on which colleges are right for each student.

The majority of students said GU provided the means and opportunity to explore college life through the many college trips (day trips, overnight trips, and extended stay trips). GU provided this opportunity by covering travel expenses to various colleges and providing adult supervision during school hours as well as non-school hours. Many students said this would not have been possible without GU since one or both parents work and would not have been able to make such trips. In fact, very few students visited colleges outside of the GU trips (less than 15% of students). GU students thought the college trips allowed them to make personal contact with students and administrators from colleges and get a realistic idea about college life such as living space, food quality, and stress levels of students during exam periods. One student replied: “GU is a program that allows students to become familiar with college at an early stage of the process. The program exposes you to what you will deal with in the future as far as college, which only makes your college experience fun!”

Students defined GU as an academic resource that provided all types of tutoring, academic help, SAT prep, and guidance through the high school and college application process. College GU programs often provided rewards for doing well academically, which students said helped increase their motivation.

Students defined GU as a source of administrative help. GU provided instruction on how to research scholarships and find various means of financial aid. They held workshops to walk students and

GEAR UP students thought the college trips allowed them to make personal contact with students and administrators from colleges and get a realistic idea about college life such as living space, food quality, and stress levels of students during exam periods.

One student suggested GEAR UP is an “extended school day based on students’ likes and interests,” while another student spoke of the program as a way to escape the perils of the neighborhood, stating GEAR UP “got me off the streets.”

their families through financial aid forms. Some students explicitly identified GU’s focus of working with students of limited family resources to prepare for college. “GU is a program that gives students, who may not have otherwise, [the ability] to look further into college because they may not have the financial background and opportunity to experience college and other activities.” Another student said that “college wasn’t on my mind until I was able to afford some of the activities” through GU.

Still other students identified GU as a program that provided a place to go where students could continue schoolwork or express themselves with people who cared about them. One student suggested GU is an “extended school day based on students’ likes and interests,” while another student spoke of the program as a way to escape the perils of the neighborhood, stating GU “got me off the streets.” Many students spoke highly about the personal care of the staff with comments such as: “It’s where the staff has a one-to-one relationship with the students and gets to know us for who we are and not judge according to just what they see.”

Finally, students defined GU through the social aspects, as a program that allows you to “meet many people from other areas in the world, city, state, and country.” Students enjoyed meeting other students from areas as close as Westchester and Long Island (NYC suburbs) to areas as far away as Germany.¹⁹ One student claimed GU is “for experiencing new things with different people,” while another reported that it “helps to unleash creativity and opportunity through activities.”

Overall, students defined GU as a comprehensive program offering financial, academic, and psychosocial support and development. Students agreed that GU is a place to “learn and advance.” Students identify this program as a vital component of their high school career providing much academic help, but providing much more than that in the form of counseling and personal attention to assist in their pursuit of higher education. As one student described it, “GU is a hand that holds mine and constantly pulls me upwards.”

QUESTION 2

Students were asked to describe how often they participate in GEAR UP activities, what types of activities they are involved in, and when they became involved in the program.

Some students reported involvement since 8th or 9th grade (30%), while others were not involved until 11th or 12th grade (40%).

Regardless of when students became involved in GU, the majority of students would have liked to join earlier: “It would have helped to

¹⁹ GU students at regional college residential and special summer programs attended with high school students from other areas.

have had GU earlier to become more motivated and be better students.” Most suggested they would have become more involved at an earlier time if they had known about the program. Additionally, students reported that it was sometimes difficult to distinguish GU programs from other programs offered in schools, due to a lack of GU identity in some high schools.

Students reported different levels of participation. Some had only attended one or two activities (such as a college tour or college fair). Others have been extremely involved participating in activities daily after school (such as tutoring), on weekends (college tours and SAT prep), and on summer and mid-year breaks (college tours and trips, college classes, special programs such as the Youth Leadership Summit through the National Council of Community and Education Partnerships). Students who said they participate daily after school said “It’s like a family. It’s fun.”

There was a vast array of GU activities described by the students. Students from all focus groups said they participated in some type of college trip. These ranged from day trips during school and weekends to overnight trips on weekends, over school breaks, and during the summer. Some reported participation in college classes over the summer (Syracuse or local CUNY schools) for 6 weeks.

Students talked about the after-school activities provided by GU. Again, students from all high schools reported participation in tutoring. Most participated in SAT preparation, either in a formal class, or through use of printed exam preparation materials with guidance from tutors.

Other activities varied by college program affiliation. Some students reported participation in sports through GU, at the high school or affiliated college (e.g., basketball, baseball, softball, and dance). Other students said these activities were not available to them, but wished they were, especially students from high schools without gym facilities or physical education programs. Several other GU programs’ activities were described: a project to work with disabled children in hospitals, a film project, conferences, a school newspaper project, computer access, job search assistance, and fundraisers.

Students reported different levels and types of activities offered. Some common programs include the college trips, SAT preparation, and tutoring. Students who had not been offered a wide range of activities through GU wished they had been offered more, but appreciated what they did have. Other students simply repeated that they were not aware of many GU activities due to a lack of advertising. Students from high schools that had fewer opportunities seemed to feel as though they “missed out” upon hearing the number of activities that other students had and the great experiences these activities provided.

Students from all focus groups said they participated in some type of college trip. These ranged from day trips during school and weekends to overnight trips on weekends, over school breaks, and during the summer.

A small percentage of students (about 15%) said that nothing prevented them from participating in more GEAR UP programs. These students said they participated in everything that was offered, unless they had already done it.

QUESTION 3

Students were asked “What has prevented you from participating in more GEAR UP activities?”

There were predictably other events and commitments that take up students’ time and prevent them from participating in GU activities. Jobs (25%) and schoolwork (20%) were most often reported as preventing greater participation in GU. Many students explained they were involved in other school programs that conflicted with GU activities, including sports and yearbook committee. Some students had religious commitments or family responsibilities. One student said that “insecurities about religious background” prevented more involvement.

A few students said that they had “senioritis” and were more interested in their social life and having fun. Another student reported that “some activities didn’t seem fun, [but were] just more schoolwork.”

Some students said they found out about activities too late to get a permission slip signed, or simply didn’t know about events at all. One student wanted to participate in an academic mentoring/tutoring program, but his/her grades were not bad enough. This student had passed the exam for which help was being offered, but wanted to get a higher grade. The academic help was only offered to students who had not passed the exam.

A small percentage of students (about 15%) said that nothing prevented them from participating in more GU programs. These students said they participated in everything that was offered, unless they had already done it.

To summarize, typical factors such as work, sports, family and socializing prevented some students from greater participation. Other students were not informed about activities in time or at all, preventing their participation. The remaining students said they participated in anything and everything GU offered.

Evaluating GEAR UP

QUESTION 4

Students were asked to describe the best part of GEAR UP.

Students listed a variety of things they thought were the “best” part of GU. In general, these included the staff, college tours, financial help, activities and resources. Students affiliated with all partner colleges agreed that the staff of GU made the program more enjoyable. Many reported that the GU staff really get to know the students and did not judge them, even asserting that “Some GU staff members know us better than our teachers.” Students report that most of the staff can relate to them and treat the students with respect. One student suggested that it “looks like the staff really like their jobs.” They describe the staff as helpful, friendly, and trustworthy. Some students suggest that their coordinator “fights for us” and “makes things happen” even when other faculty and administration think it is too much work. At one school, students compared GU and non-GU staff members, suggesting that their college advisor was lacking, but the GU coordinator was a friend as well as a good advisor. Other students recognized and appreciated the counseling that GU staff provided: “The best thing I enjoyed in this program is that there is always someone to talk to when you need answers.”

College tours were the second most frequently listed “best” part of GU. Students from every site valued these experiences. They recognized the need to visit a college before attending it because “you learn so much more about the place when you see it firsthand.” The students know these experiences will help them make a decision, allowing them to determine the extent to which each college was truthful on their Web site and pamphlets. They also loved meeting new students from across the state and country while on these trips. Students said it helped them get a broader sense of the world as well as college life.

Students appreciated the financial help that GU provided from SAT fee waivers to paying for all expenses for college trips. Students said that they and their parents appreciated this aspect of the program and recognized that many of these experiences would not have been possible for them without GEAR UP. For example, one student described how her mother hesitated to allow her to sign up for the summer college tour because she could not afford it. The girl told her mom, “GU is going to pay for everything,” and was therefore allowed to go.

Students loved the fact that they could do just about “ANY activity you want” in GU from sports to academic help to using the Internet. Finally, students listed many resources provided by GU that they appreciated—such as local resource libraries, experienced staff, exposure to new things, financial aid assistance, and learning how and

“The best thing [about] this program is that there is always someone to talk to when you need answers.”

Students overwhelmingly agreed that they would recommend GEAR UP to younger students. Some students said they would speak on behalf of GEAR UP and would love to continue to be a part of the GEAR UP family when they are at college, either serving as a tutor, leading, or helping with activities.

where to look for scholarships and financial aid. Students recognized that GU fed them often, in conjunction with activities and events, and basically helped them with anything they needed.

QUESTION 5

Students were asked if they would recommend GEAR UP to new students in younger grades and why.

All students unanimously agreed they would “highly recommend” this program. Students supported this answer by explaining that GU “provides many different types of opportunities, such as visiting colleges to learn about them firsthand.” Others say they’d recommend GU for the personal relationships with the staff and meeting new people. Some students suggested that GU provided a good support network that helped them deal with pressures and deadlines because “other GU students are going through it too.” Several students agreed that “most of our high school memories will involve GEAR UP.”

Some students said that GU provided a “wake up call” and makes you realize that college isn’t that far off. This was a common theme among most students. Many said they wished they were “more serious about GU earlier.” They explained that if they had become involved earlier they would have had a better perspective on school and college requirements. One student perceptively remarked that younger students “may not listen, but keep talking to them to make sure they get involved in stuff earlier.”

Students felt like the information and experience gained through GU was invaluable, “there is so much we have learned about college.” Several students agreed that “everyone can’t get into a Division 1 school, and GU has helped us differentiate schools” and learn how to set realistic expectations about where they could apply. One student remarked, “Parents like it too [because it] helps provide motivation and encouragement through [the college] application process. GU also provides help to parents who do not have the time or ability to help the students write a good college essay.”

Students overwhelmingly agreed that they would recommend GU to younger students. Some students said they would speak on behalf of GU and would love to continue to be a part of the GU family when they are at college, either serving as a tutor, leading, or helping with activities.

QUESTION 6

Students were asked what they would change about GEAR UP to make it better for other students.

Students from different high schools had numerous suggestions to enhance the quality of GU. Some comments were consistent based on the college affiliation. The most frequent response was that GU needed to have its own physical space within each high school for staff as

well as a room or lounge for the GU students to meet during free periods and after school. Students whose schools currently had space in the high school (about 2 out of the 11 high schools represented) asked for larger space to more adequately serve the students, and requested more resources such as computers for homework and college research. Students from one high school said they often have to share the library with other groups of students after school (e.g., the football team), and can “barely think and do work since it is loud and crowded.” Students from high schools independently mentioned that GU should “get more respect since they do so much for the students.”

Students from several high schools also mentioned increasing the public face of GU to “get more people to know about it—more publicity.” Some offered ways to accomplish this, such as getting more time on school announcements and using assemblies to meet with students and describe the types of activities that GU provides. Students suggested a “documentary will help get the word out,” and offered to help spread the word about GU in the future. In addition to more publicity, students from several high schools were interested in meeting more of the GU students from other high schools across New York City. They wanted to have more interactions with other GU students through local or long-distance trips and events, competitions, sports or volunteer work. The students all appreciated meeting other GU students and staff when traveling to colleges on trips; they thought the opportunity to form relationships within a broader community could be enhanced with more local collaboration. Students said this would help when choosing a college because it would expose them to more students from the local area who might be interested in the same school. Students said they would feel more comfortable knowing other GU students of similar background were going to the same college.

While all students valued the help GU provided for college prep, they felt that more emphasis was needed in this area. Some suggested having a “rigorous and comprehensive college preparatory class that included help with SAT preparation, essays, and timelines for college applications.” Many students echoed this request, suggesting the program should make students begin writing essays and personal statements much earlier. Some explained that the week before Christmas break students were “scrambling to get in the common application.” They thought this wasn’t necessary and could have been avoided if they had “more [realistic] expectations about what deadlines were coming up.” They suggested having a pre-set timeline of expectations for students each year to help students prepare and manage deadlines as they approach. Students said they would be willing to travel for this type of service throughout the city if it was not possible to offer it at each GU location or high school.

College tours and trips were one of the most valued offerings provided by GU. Students, however, suggested that these could be

Students from several high schools were interested in meeting more of the GU students from other high schools across New York City.

“Every high school and GU program should have someone like [our coordinator]—if they did, no students would fail!”

enhanced in several ways. First, they suggested visiting more schools outside New York State, even some cross-country trips. Also, students thought it would have been great if they were asked what schools they wanted to visit and had some of their suggestions incorporated into the schedule. Students from all high schools realized the planning and cost associated with these requests, and suggested to help manage costs the GU high schools could collaborate with each other to offer trips.

Other requests reflected things the students were not offered at their high school, but may have been offered at other GU high schools. For example, students affiliated with one college wanted more “personal attention as opposed to so many group activities.” However, this was clearly happening at other locations. Additionally, some students asked to meet more than once a week for activities. Students linked to another college asked for “younger staff to relate to students and understand what they need help with.” These students explained that recently their high school had recently hired a great GU person, but for the years before that, they did not feel like the GU staff was as good as it could have been.

QUESTION 7

Students were asked to describe the GEAR UP leaders and staff and what they thought about those people.

Students’ responses to this question varied by high school. Some students thought the world of their coordinators, mentors and tutors. “Every high school and GU program should have someone like [our coordinator]—if they did, no students would fail!” Other students said their local GU staff was “very involved. Mentors came into classes when we needed help and stayed after school for one-on-one help.” Others reported that the GU staff was “informative and friendly, down to earth, cool, and funny.” Some students suggested that the GU coordinator and staff members “care about us personally and academically—which is a great balance.”

Other students didn’t even know their coordinators, and barely knew local GU staff at their high school. Students at these schools knew they could have had a better GU representative, reporting that some of the staff “had other jobs to do and weren’t concerned about our needs.” These students said they needed people who would help guide them through the college process.

However, despite the lack of local support at some high schools, some students had a strong relationship with Central Office GEAR UP administrative staff members, who were responsible for consortium-wide activities such as the college tours, summer college camps, and award programs. They reported that the Central Office “GU staff goes out of their way for us. They want to work with us.” They reported that Central Office staff did many things that weren’t necessarily part

of their jobs such as “making labels for us for colleges,” or calling the students back and answering all sorts of questions, no matter how large or small. Students reported that Central Office staff members “were great! They helped us with our bags, rode the trains with us, and suggested that we mingle with other kids from different schools. They gave us personal attention in many different aspects; on trips and after trips with follow-up help on applications. They went above and beyond what they need to do.”

Many students spoke highly about GU staff on trips, “the Syracuse trip coordinator was great—open and friendly. We were very comfortable with him, especially by the end of the trip.” Other students said the age of the GU staff (the younger the better), such as mentors and tutors, makes a difference and helps with relationships.

To summarize, students generally like the GU staff they interacted with. However, some colleges seemed to fall short on the amount of time that the GU coordinators and local staff interacted with students. Students generally rated their staff high, with a 9 or 10 on a ten-point scale, with the lowest ratings of 6-7. The descriptions above provide more detail about what made a GU staff member effective in the opinion of students.

QUESTION 8

Students were asked about the type and amount of information the GU program provided about college.

Students learned about college in many different ways through the GU program. Students said they received information in school, through the mail, and through e-mail. Most students mentioned that GU had speakers from various colleges come and talk to them, and had in-school presentations about colleges and the application process. Students said they learned to research colleges on the Internet with guidance from the GU staff and attended college fairs.

Students talked about the workshops held by GU that helped them and their parents learn about financial aid. They explained how this workshop and follow up support helped them understand the more difficult aspects of college applications. Students also participated in workshops to learn about and practice mock interviews and review tips on writing college essays. Students explained that GU staff provided extensive and personal support for them through efforts to call their homes to remind them of important deadlines, or even to “talk to parents and support students desire to go to college,” for those parents who resisted or did not understand the intricacies of higher education and the application process.

Students reported that “going to college campuses was the best [way to learn]; it was very revealing to learn about colleges first-hand.” Students said visiting colleges gave them a realistic preview of things such as food, location, convenience, and accessibility. Students recog-

Students explained that GU staff provided extensive and personal support for them through efforts to call their homes to remind them of important deadlines, or even to “talk to parents and support students desire to go to college.”

Through one-on-one sessions as well as group meetings, GEAR UP staff helped students research colleges based on their interests.

nized that GU's college trips helped “defray the cost of college visits.” Other students realized that going away for a weekend to visit a college or for summer classes away at a college (Syracuse University) helped them feel comfortable with moving someplace outside the city and made them feel empowered: “after the Syracuse trip, I knew I had the ability to do college work.”

Finally, students spoke about their personal connection with GU staff members and how this helped them learn which colleges might be right for them in terms of their educational skills as well as financial status. Students reported that GU staff “got to know us—and would suggest a path for college.” Through one-on-one sessions as well as group meetings, GU staff helped students research colleges based on their interests. Students said GU made them “familiar and comfortable with the process.” Some students said the Central Office GU staff provided extended help, answering questions or providing information about schools, financial aid, and scholarships after meetings or workshops.

Students felt they learned a tremendous amount about individual colleges, the application process, and about what they were looking for in a college. They reported that GU provided help all along the way and enabled them to visit schools and do things they may not have been able to do otherwise.

Assessing GEAR UP Outcomes

QUESTION 9

Students were asked if they plan on attending college. They were also asked to describe those colleges; how many did they apply to? What types did they apply to?

Students from all schools said they had applied to college and will attend some type of college. About 98 percent of the students reported that they applied to more than one college, many applied to four or five colleges, and some applied to as many as twenty-nine (a large number of those were through one or two common applications). At the time of the focus groups, some students had already received acceptances to colleges (about 10%).

Students described the type of colleges they applied to as CUNY, SUNY, in-state, out-of-state, private, public, parochial or Ivy League. Students applied to schools in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Florida, Pennsylvania, Missouri, North Carolina, Massachusetts, Vermont, Georgia, California, Washington D.C., and Maryland. Some students reported that they would like to study abroad at some time during college. Students said they have mentioned GEAR UP during interviews at Harvard and Cornell; these colleges were aware of GEAR UP and impressed by the college visits/interviews of their students.

A partial list of colleges applied to (as reported by students in the focus groups; see also colleges of enrollment for fall 2005 on page 17 in “A History of the Project.”):

CUNY

Baruch College
College of Staten Island
Hunter College
Medgar Evers College
York College

SUNY

Fashion Institute of Technology
Old Westbury
Oneonta
New Paltz

Out of State

Boston College
Boston University
Florida Atlantic
Florida College
Harvard University
Howard University
Lawrence Technical College
Pennsylvania State University
Seton Hall University
Temple University
University of Vermont

New York State Private

Cornell University
Fordham University
Hofstra University
Manhattanville College
New York University
Syracuse University

Potential Majors

(Largely motivated by high school or college-credit classes taken through CUNY College Now.)

Anthropology	Business	Communications
Dance	English	Engineering
Graphic Design	Nursing	Pharmacy
Pre-Med	Pre-Law	Psychology
Science	Sports Management	Teaching/Education

BEFORE the focus group ended, students were asked to provide any final comments about GEAR UP, and in their own words provided the following comments:

- “If [GEAR UP] gets the new grant, they should give more to current students such as scholarships.”
- “Everything they could do they did. It’s a great program.”
- “Most students always thought they’d go to college. But it was the timing of when they started to think about college that changed through GU.”
- “We know the difference between HS and college, and that you learn so much about yourself, and the type of friends compatible with you. This was learned during the six-week college trip. You meet so many different people. We were there for a purpose: to learn, but we still had fun outside of class.”
- “It would be great if GU could have different activities to help support/ expose students to different things (sports, music, dance).”
- “There should be internships through GU.”
- “There really should be a classroom or lounge for a home-base for GU/ small library of college resources or tools.”
- “We love GU.”

“Everything they could do they did. [GEAR UP is] a great program.”

APPENDIX A

Information on Records

Table 28: Number of Records on NYCDOE File

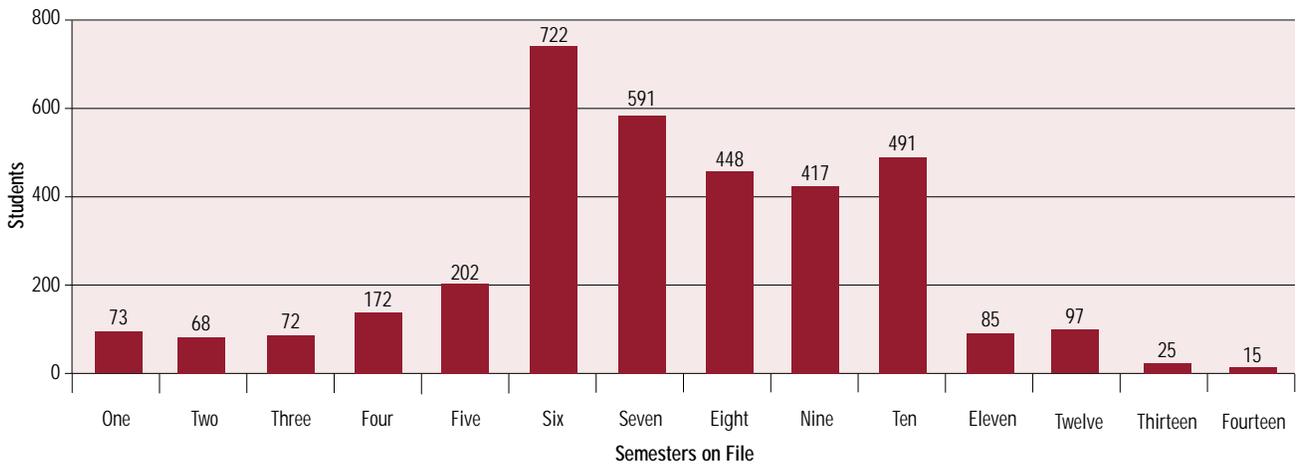
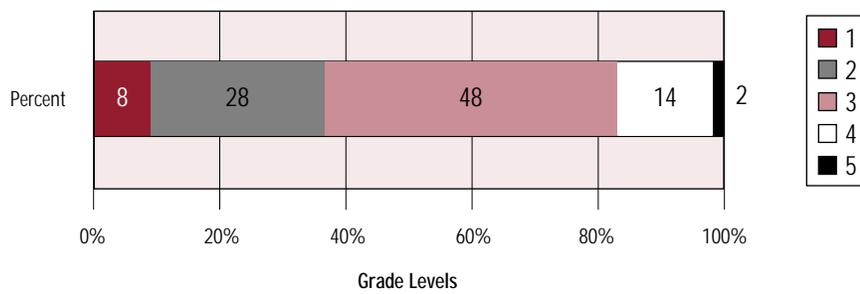


Table 29: Number of Grade Levels on File



APPENDIX B

Percent of Students Eligible for Free Lunch by GEAR UP Program

There was a significant initial difference between GU colleges in the percentage of students eligible for free lunch, $F(8,2314) = 54.93, p = .001$.

Since free lunch was a continuous variable, the above interactions (for categorical variables) cannot be assessed for it. However, in addition to initial differences between GU colleges on this variable, there was a significant correlation between free lunch and GPA, $r = .115, p = .001$, and free lunch and attendance rate, $r = .07, p = .001$.

Differences are shown in the table below:

Table 30

Free Lunch		Alpha = .05.				
GU Program Location	N	1	2	3	4	5
Central Office 1—GW	193	71.48%				
Queens College	113	61.86%	61.86%			
York	149		56.92%	56.92%		
NYCCT	164		55.25%	55.25%		
Brooklyn	284		55.13%	55.13%		
Hunter	143			49.57%	49.57%	
Central Office 2	145			47.89%	47.89%	
Lehman	312				41.20%	41.20%
CSI	820					34.30%

- CO 1 (GW) and Queens College had the highest percentage of students eligible for free lunch.
- CO 1 had a significantly higher percentage of students eligible for free lunch than all other GU colleges except Queens.
- Queens had a significantly higher percentage of students eligible for free lunch than Hunter, CO 2 (non GW), Lehman, and CSI students.
- York, NYCCT, and Brooklyn had a significantly higher percentage of students eligible for free lunch than Lehman and CSI.
- Hunter and CO 2 (non GW) had a significantly higher percentage of students eligible for free lunch than CSI only.
- CSI had a lower percentage of students eligible for free than all colleges except Lehman.

APPENDIX C

GEAR UP Activity Data

The following table provides detailed data by year about GU activities. It provides the number of students in GU activities, the average and range of hours and activities by each trimester.

Table 31

2001			
Trimester	1—Spring	2—Summer	3—Fall
# Students in GU Activities	1	4	8
# of Activities—Average	3 activities	1.8 activities	2.1 activities
# Activities—Range		1–3 activities	1–3 activities
Total # Hours for Activities—Range—Average	12 hours	108 hours	16-1/4 hours
Total # Hours for Activities—Range		27–240 hours	1–57 hours
2002			
Trimester	1—Spring	2—Summer	3—Fall
# Students in GU Activities	316	171	1869
# of Activities—Average	3.6 activities	3 activities	4.1 activities
# Activities—Range	1–16 activities	1–15 activities	1–15 activities
Total # Hours for Activities—Range—Average	47 hours	148 hours	39 hours
Total # Hours for Activities—Range	2-378 hours	0–520 hours	1–670 hours
2003			
Trimester	1—Spring	2—Summer	3—Fall
# Students in GU Activities	1348	143	1740
# of Activities—Average	4 activities	2.6 activities	6.2 activities
# Activities—Range	1–15 activities	1–6 activities	2–24 activities
Total # Hours for Activities—Range—Average	122 hours	213 hours	208 hours
Total # Hours for Activities—Range	0–600 hours	4–672 hours	2–1568 hours
2004			
Trimester	1—Spring	2—Summer	3—Fall
Total # Students in GU Activities	1410	227	
# of Activities—Average	2.3 activities	1.7	
# Activities—Range	1–7 activities	1-4	
Total # Hours for Activities—Average	46 hours	65	
Total # Hours for Activities—Range	1–250 hours	1–305	

APPENDIX D

Supplemental Analyses of Demographic Variables and GU Status as They Relate to GPA

The following analyses contributed to the development of analyses described in the text above.

Did other things influence GPA in addition to the GEAR UP program?

Additional analyses were run to see if students' GPAs differ based on the following demographic characteristics:

- Age
- Gender
- Special Education Status
- Race

All of these demographic characteristics had a main effect on GPA.

- There was a main effect for age on GPA. This meant that younger students ($M = 72.73$ for 16–17 yr. olds) have higher GPAs than older ones ($M = 66.96$ for 18–22 yr. olds) $F(6,3472) = 43, p > .001$. Age accounted for 6.9% of the variance in GPA.
- There was a main effect for gender on GPA. This meant that females ($M = 66.2$) have higher GPAs than males ($M = 63.3$), $F(1,3472) = 47.2, p > .001$. Gender accounted for 1.3% of this variance in GPA.
- There was a main effect for special education status on GPA: students who were not special education had a higher GPA ($M = 67.53$) than students who were special education. ($M = 59.86$), $F(1,3471) = 61.12, p > .001$.
- There was a main effect for race on GPA, such that Hispanic ($M = 65.6$) and Black ($M = 65.2$) students had lower GPAs than White ($M = 73$) and Asian ($M = 74.8$) students $F(3,3453) = 25.09, p < .001$. 2.1% of the variance in GPA was accounted for by race.

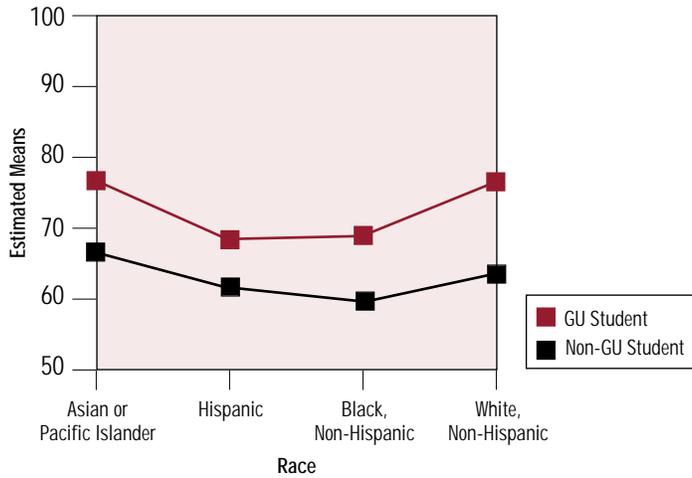
Two variables interacted with GU status when comparing GPA: race and special education status.

Race by GU Status Interaction on GPA

There was a race by GU interaction on GPA, indicating that the effect of GU on GPA differed by race. GU had a stronger influence on Asian/ Pacific Islander (9 point difference in GPA) and White (9.7 point difference in GPA) students than it did on Hispanic (5 point difference in GPA) or Black (7 point difference in GPA) students, $F(4,3453) = 53.28, p < .001$. 5.8% of the variance in GPA was accounted for by the Race x GU interaction.

- Note: Two categories of races were dropped from this analysis due to a low number of students: Native American/Alaskan Native ($n = 15$) and race unknown ($n = 3$).

Table 32: Estimated Means of GPA by Race & GU Status

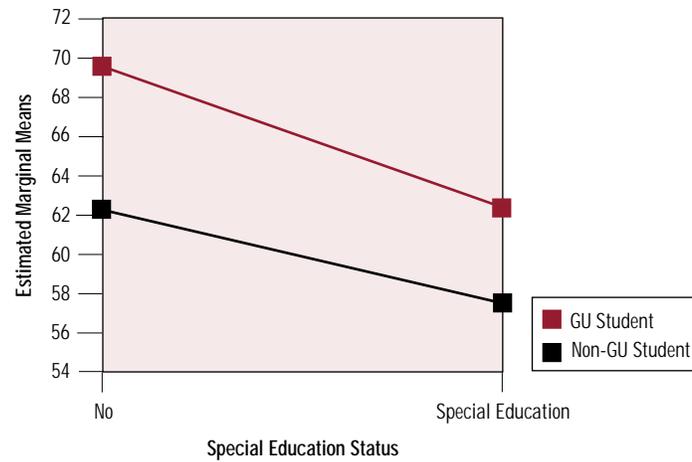


	GU Student	Non-GU student	Diff
Asian or Pacific Islander	76.3	67.3	9
Hispanic	67.5	62.5	5
Black, Non-Hispanic	67.1	60.1	7
White, Non-Hispanic	74.1	64.4	9.7
Total	69.2	62	7.2

Special Education Status by GU Status Interaction on GPA

There was a GU by special education ID interaction on GPA indicating that the effect of GU on GPA differed by special education status. GU had a stronger influence on GPA for non special education students (GPA difference of 6.9 points) than on special education students (GPA difference of 5.8 points), $F(2,3471) = 126.19, p < .001$. The special education x GU interaction accounted for 6.8% of the variance in GPA.

Table 33: Estimated Means of GPA by Special Education & GEAR UP Status

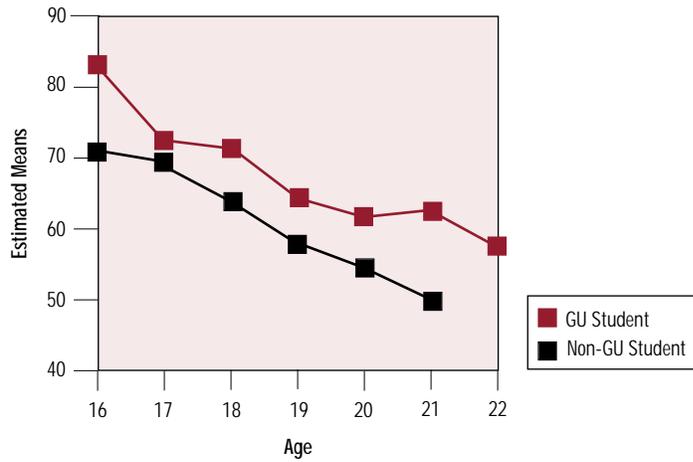


Average GPA			
	GU Student	Not GU Student	Diff
Special Education	62.4	56.6	5.8
Not Special Education	69.5	62.6	6.9

Two variables did not interact with GU status when comparing GPA: age and gender.

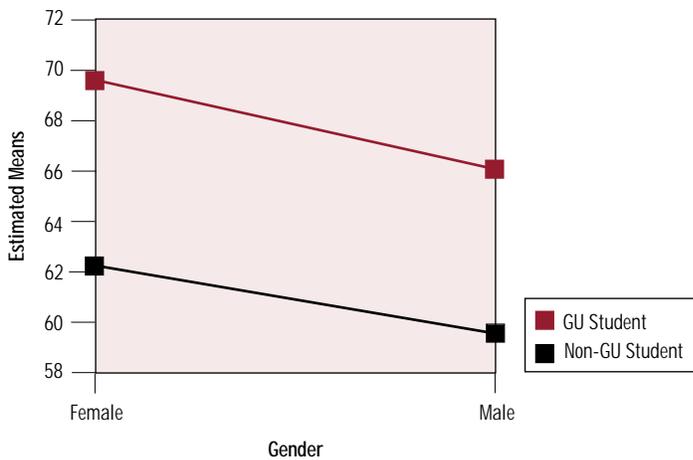
There was no interaction between GU status and either age or gender on GPA. This meant that the GEAR UP program had the same effect on GPA for all ages and both genders, thus the influence of GU on GPA was generalizable across age groups and genders.

Table 34: Estimated Means of GPA by Age



Average GPA		
Age	GU Student	Not GU Student
16	83.1	70.3
17	73.3	69.2
18	71.2	64.0
19	64.4	58.0
20	63.2	55.2
21	64.3	49.2
22	56.1	—

Table 35: Estimated Means of GPA by Gender



Average GPA		
Gender	GU Student	Not GU Student
Female	69.5	62.3
Male	66.4	59.7

APPENDIX E

Supplemental Analyses of Demographic Variables and GU Status as They Relate to Attendance Rate

The following analyses contributed to the development of analyses described in the text above.

Did other things influence attendance rates in addition to the GEAR UP program?

Additional analyses were run to see if students' attendance rates differed based on the following demographic characteristics:

- Age
- Gender
- Special Education Status
- Race

All of these demographic characteristics had a main effect on attendance except gender.

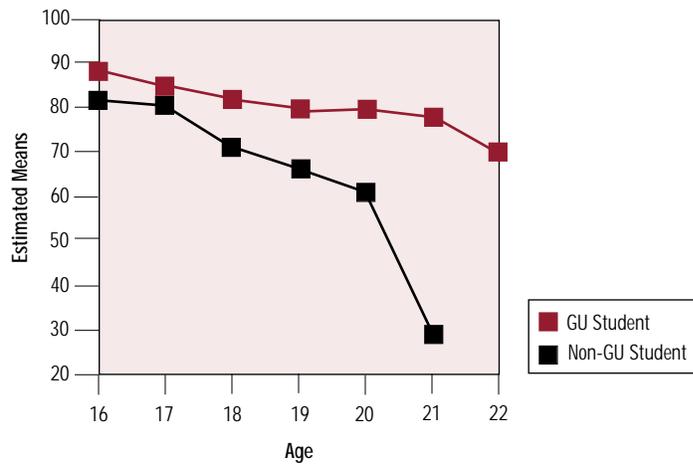
- There was a main effect for age. The oldest students (age 22, $n=6$, $M = 68.9\%$) had lower attendance rates than the youngest students (age 16, $n = 6$, $M = 88.2\%$; age 17, $n = 92$, $M = 86.3\%$) $F(6,3362) = 29.41$, $p > .001$. Age accounted for 5% of the variance in attendance.
- There was a main effect for special education status: students who were not special education had better attendance ($M = 75.7\%$) than students who were special education ($M = 69.3\%$), $F(1,3362) = 39.43$, $p > .001$. Special education status accounted for 1.2% of the variance in attendance.
- There was a main effect for race, such that Asian students ($M = 83.9\%$) had a higher attendance rate than Black ($M = 77.3\%$), White ($M = 78.7\%$), and Hispanic ($M = 77.9\%$) students, $F(3,3346) = 5.89$, $p < .001$. Less than 1% of the variance in attendance was accounted for by race.

Two variables interacted with GU status when comparing attendance rates: age and special education status.

Age by GU Status Interaction on Attendance Rates

There was an age by GU interaction on attendance rates, indicating that the effect of GU status on attendance differed by age. GU had a stronger influence on older students' attendance. Older students (18 and older) had a greater increase in attendance rates than younger students (10% difference or more compared to approx 4% difference in attendance), $F(5,3362) = 3.64$, $p = .003$. Less than 1% of the variance in attendance was accounted for by this Age x GU interaction.

Table 36: Avg. Attendance Rate by Age

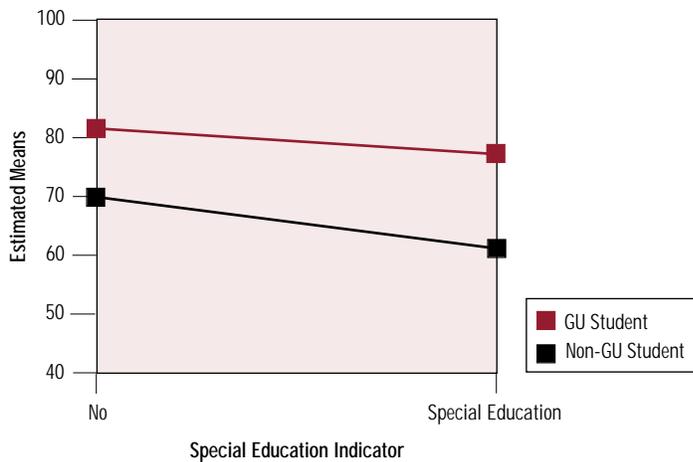


Semester Attendance Rates			
	GU Student	Not GU Student	Raw Diff
16	88.1	82.6	5.5
17	84.5	81.3	3.2
18	82.3	72.2	10.1
19	76.8	64.9	11.9
20	76.3	60.4	15.9
21	76.3	29.7	46.6
22	67.3		

Special Education Status by GU Status Interaction on Attendance Rates

There was a marginally significant GU by special education ID interaction on attendance indicating that the effect of GU on attendance differed by special education status. GU had a stronger influence on attendance for special education students (diff = 15.6) than on non-special education students (diff = 11.6), $F(1,3362) = 6.63, p = .057$. The special education x GU interaction accounted for less than 1% of the variance in attendance.

Table 37: Avg. Attendance Rate by Special Education Status

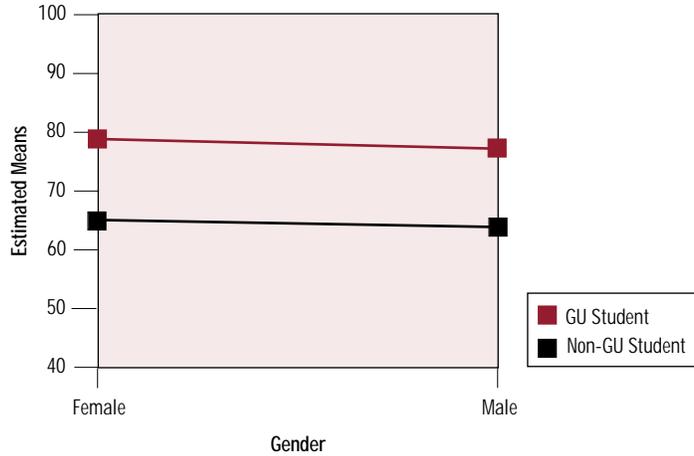


Semester Attendance Rates			
	GU Student	Not GU Student	Raw Diff
Special Education	76.5	60.9	15.6
Not Special Education	81.1	69.5	11.6

Two variables did not interact with GU status when comparing GPA: race and gender.

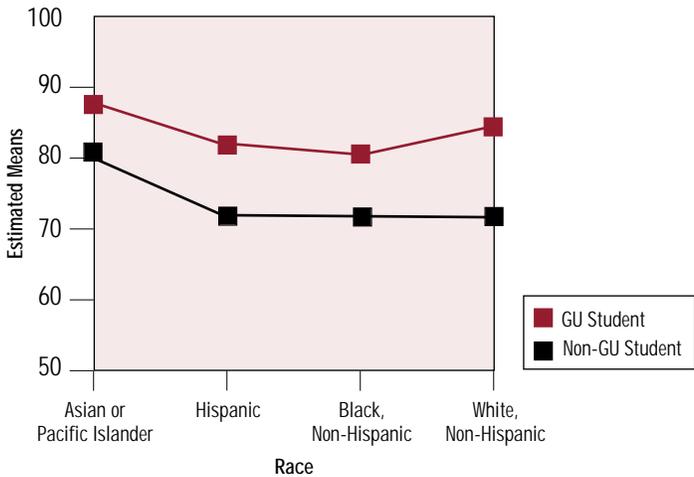
This means that the GU program had the same effect on all races and both genders in terms of attendance rates, thus the influence of GU was generalizable across race and gender.

Table 38: Average Attendance Rate by Gender



Semester Attendance Rates		
	GU Student	Not GU Student
Female	69.5	62.3
Male	66.4	59.7

Table 39: Average Attendance Rate by Race



Semester Attendance Rates				
	GU Student		Not GU Student	
	Mean	N	Mean	N
Asian or Pacific Islander	86.6	131	81.3	26
Hispanic	82.5	986	73.3	624
Black, Non-Hispanic	81.7	746	73.0	291
White, Non-Hispanic	83.7	480	73.6	63
Total	82.7	2343	73.5	1004

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